

The RISE Education Systems Diagnostic Toolkit

PART 3(c):

Example Materials from the Pilot Studies

This document contains one section of the RISE Education Systems Diagnostic Toolkit.

Part 1 | **OVERVIEW**

Part 2 | **IMPLEMENTATION**

Part 3 | **RESOURCES**

| Glossary

| Training Video and Slide Decks

| **Example Materials from the Pilot Studies**

Download the full toolkit at: https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-Misc_2023/09.

The RISE Education Systems Diagnostic Toolkit

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RISE

RESEARCH ON IMPROVING
SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION

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Example Materials from the Pilot Studies

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Each section of the toolkit should be consulted during the indicated phases of the RISE Education Systems Diagnostic:

- 1 Inception
- 2 Desk review
- 3 Stakeholder workshops & interviews
- 4 Analysis
- 5 Prioritisation workshop
- 6 Final report

More details on each phase are available in the Implementation Guide (Part 2).

This section of the RISE Education Systems Diagnostic Toolkit showcases a selection of materials from the diagnostic pilot studies conducted in 2022. It includes examples of data collection tools and workshop slide decks that have been used in the field, together with examples of inception reports, desk reviews, and final reports.

For more details on the Diagnostic, please refer to the toolkit, available here:

https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-Misc_2023/09.

List of example materials, by diagnostic phase

Click on each row to jump to the respective set of materials.

Type of material	Lead organisation	Geographic focus
1 Inception		
• Inception report	JPC-VERSO	Balochistan, Pakistan
• Introductory slide deck	Global School Leaders	GSL partner countries
2 Desk review		
• Desk review report	SUMMA	Ecuador
3 Stakeholder workshops and interviews		
• Data collection instruments	Central Square Foundation	A state in northern India
• Data collection instruments	EPRC	Uganda
• Survey instrument and methods note	Global School Leaders	GSL partner countries
• Workshop slide deck (Spanish)	SUMMA	Ecuador
4 Analysis		
• Analysis tools	JPC-VERSO	Balochistan, Pakistan
6 Final report and dissemination		
• Final report	University of the Witwatersrand	Gauteng, South Africa
• Final report	EPRC	Uganda
• Final report	JPC-VERSO	Balochistan, Pakistan
• Final report (Spanish & English)	SUMMA	Ecuador

Note: There are no example materials available for the fifth phase (prioritisation workshop).

More background information on the context, approach, and findings of each diagnostic pilot are available in the full [toolkit](#) in the Part 1 section on “Applications of the RISE Education Systems Diagnostic”.

The RISE Education Systems Diagnostic Toolkit

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1

Example materials from the inception phase

Inception report by the **JPC- VERSO** team from their diagnostic pilot in **Balochistan, Pakistan**



Inception Report

Implementation Plan for the RISE Education Diagnostics in Balochistan, Pakistan

Verso Consulting
&
Juniper Policy Consulting

Date: 31/03/2022



Juniper Policy Consulting

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INCEPTION REPORT

1. Background

Pakistan is a federation with a multi-tiered governance structure. The country's federal design underwent a major change in 2010 when political, administrative and fiscal authority and responsibility over nearly all social subjects were devolved to the provinces through the 18th Amendment to the Constitution. Notable subjects of devolution in social sector were health and school education. From policy development, planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring to ~~and~~ curriculum and standards, all key functions across the school education delivery chain came under the purview of the provinces. Previously, education delivery was managed at the provincial level but jurisdiction over education policy, planning and curriculum lay with the Federal Government. The 18th Amendment not only devolved these functions but also accorded constitutional protection to the enhanced fiscal space made available to the provinces by the 7th National Finance Commission (NFC) Award—which increased the overall share of provinces in total fiscal resources, adopted a more equitable formula for horizontal distribution of resources and devolved an important tax—General Sales Tax on Services—to the provinces. Furthermore, the 18th Amendment also enhanced the responsibility of the provinces through insertion of Article 25A in the Constitution, which made the provision of free and compulsory elementary education to all children, aged 5 to 16, a mandatory obligation of the State.

Balochistan, which is Pakistan's poorest, most fragile and smallest province in terms of population, has witnessed an increased prioritization of education in the public policy arena since the adoption of the afore-mentioned reforms in 2010. This prioritization is indicated, among others, by the increase in allocation of financial resources for education and introduction of a number of reforms to improve education delivery. Key legal, policy and operational reforms introduced in Balochistan with regards to school education over the past decade are listed below:

- a. Adoption of the Compulsory Education Act 2014
- b. Teaching of mother language as an additional subject (should not be confused with teaching in the mother tongue as it is not yet implemented) 2014
- c. Adoption, approval and implementation of five-year education sector plans to steer school education delivery
- d. Delegation of management and financial powers to the district and sub-district tiers through District Education Authorities (DEAs), District Education Groups (DEGs) and formation of school-based clusters
- e. Real-time school monitoring system (RTSM) for schools & Education Management Information System (EMIS)– [management]. RTSM is a data-based real-time school monitoring system for improving monitoring of teacher attendance, school environment, student attendance and other aspects.
- f. Strengthening of Parents Teachers School Management Committees (PTSMCs) – [voice & choice]
- g. Policies regarding Induction, training, posting, and transfers of schoolteachers
- h. Most of the above reforms were donors assisted, and donors initiated in some cases. Donors figure into various relationships in the above either as principal or agent.

2. Statement of the Problem

In the wake of the adoption of the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the Government of Balochistan has introduced a number of reforms to improve the strategic planning, operational management and monitoring of school education. Notable reforms include the development and adoption of five-year sectoral plans, delegation of key management and procurement functions to district and sub-district tiers, introduction of a new data-based monitoring regime, introduction of mother languages as compulsory subjects and functionalization of parents-teacher committees at school level. Furthermore, the school education budget has increased from nearly PKR 20 Billion in 2010 to PKR 80 Billion in 2020, registering a nominal increase of nearly four times. Similarly, approximately 3,000 public new schools have been built over the past decade, amounting to a 25% increase in their number.

Increased public spending on education, construction of new public schools and introduction of major reforms in the management of school education indicate, among others, increased prioritization of education by political parties and leaders. In addition to political parties, civil society organizations and journalists have shown an interest in improving school education by giving periodic and consistent coverage to education related news and stories. The provincial judiciary (Balochistan High Court) has also demonstrated keen interest in school education by prioritizing public interest litigation related to education and pro-actively visiting public schools and institutions to assess the actual situation and help resolve pending issues, if any.

Increased public spending on education, construction of new public schools and introduction of major reforms in the management of school education have not produced desired results in the province of Balochistan. Neither has the increased interest in education by key stakeholders, notably political parties, civil society and judiciary, resulted in a major transformation in the way public education is managed and delivered. The percentage of out-of-school children has remained relatively stagnant with no major improvement. Similarly learning outcomes have continued to remain low as more than 50 percent of children in grade 5 have not developed basic literacy and numeracy skills expected by the curriculum in grade 1¹.

3. Rationale for Piloting RISE Diagnostic Framework

While the crises of out-of-school children and learning has persisted, regional political parties, civil society organizations, provincial bureaucracy and other stakeholders do not have clarity on the strategic direction that needs to be followed to effectively address the crises of schooling and learning. How is it that increase in number of public schools and reforms in education management and monitoring are not translating into a significant reduction in proportion of out-of-school children let alone improvement in learning outcomes?

One reason why even well-intended reform efforts by concerned stakeholders are not producing desired outcomes is that most often these efforts seek to treat symptoms, rather than systemic drivers, of the various ailments of education. In the rare instances where reform champions identify the systemic cause of an ailment, their prescribed approach often seeks to address that individual problem and fails to take into account the wider system and its various constituent

¹ Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2019

elements within which individual problems are uniquely situated. Therefore, an accurate diagnosis of the systemic constraints affecting education system and its various elements acquires high importance as a first step in any efforts to improve and transform education delivery.

In the light of the afore-mentioned, the proposed study seeks to apply the RISE diagnostic tool to understand how and why recent reform efforts and increased budgeting have not translated into significant improvements learning outcomes. In particular, the tool will be applied to examine and analyze the gap between expected and actual impact and their causes for the following three initiatives:

- Construction of new public schools
- Introduction of mother languages as compulsory subjects
- Real Time School Monitoring system

This exercise is expected to identify the various incoherencies and misalignments across elements of the education system that are impeding success of the afore-mentioned initiatives. Moreover, it is hoped that this diagnostic exercise will also help identify and prioritize interventions that need to be made to complement and strengthen the recent reform efforts.

4. Proposed Approach

The RISE diagnostic tool will be applied to first map the key stakeholders in the delivery of education in the province. Key features of various relationships among the multiple stakeholders in each category will be assessed through stakeholder workshops using the principal-agent model specified in the RISE diagnostic tool.

The exercise will understand the relationships of compact, management, voice & choice in the initiatives mentioned above. As politics is an overarching category in the above key relationships, the impact of politics too will be studied in the above relationships.

The plan for implementing the pilot study is as follows:

A. Formation of Diagnostic Team

For the diagnostic team, the following members are selected from VERSO and JPC.

Team Lead	Abdus Sami Khan
Senior Researcher	Rafiullah Kakar
Research Associates	Dr Muhammad Saleem
	Dr Barakat Shah
	Dr Bilal Sarwar
Research Methodology Specialist	Shirin Gul

B. The Decision to Proceed with the Diagnostic Exercise

Given the prevailing political instability in the country and the impending General Elections scheduled in a year's time, interest from the executive (cabinet members) tier of the government in the pilot project will probably be limited. Similarly, interest from the bureaucratic tier is also likely to be limited given that senior bureaucrats, especially those currently serving as administrative secretaries of departments, will be expecting greater re-shuffling and frequent transfer postings in the run-up to General Elections.

In these circumstances, it is proposed that a limited buy-in of government partners may be obtained to implement the pilot study. This limited buy-in can be ensured through two channels. First, the incumbent Secretary Secondary Education Department (SED) and at least two other senior bureaucrats who have previously served as Secretaries SED and are likely to be posted again in SED will be approached to become members of the Steering Committee. The latter will include senior bureaucrats who have built a reputation of being champions of reforms in school education.

Secondly, the Strategic Planning and Reforms Cell (SPRC) based in the Planning and Development Department will be engaged as counterparts from the government side. SPRC comprises a small team of public policy and governance specialists who provide technical assistance and policy advice and input to the Minister for Planning. One of SPRC's responsibilities is to carry out assessments and diagnosis to assess the inability of public sector departments to deliver desired results despite increased public spending and reform efforts. The diagnostic will be tailored to serve the counterparts' interests. The SPRC will be expected to integrate findings of the pilot study in their analysis and use the diagnostic tool in future to identify systemic issues in school education. In particular, the findings with regards to weak correlation between number of schools and enrolment will be of great interest to SPRC and P&D Department as the latter is responsible for approving project proposals for construction of new schools.

C. Formation of Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will serve as focal point for partners in government and non-government sectors engaged in education service delivery in the province. The steering committee will participate in the diagnostic process with facilitation of the diagnostic team. The diagnostic team will try to ensure full participation of the steering committee in the whole process. The consultation process for forming a Steering Committee for the project has already been initiated. Preliminary discussion with few senior government officers has been held.

A small steering committee is proposed so that meetings could be held on time. Previous experience suggests that it is difficult to convene meetings of committees whose members include too many senior government officers. Following members are proposed for steering committee:

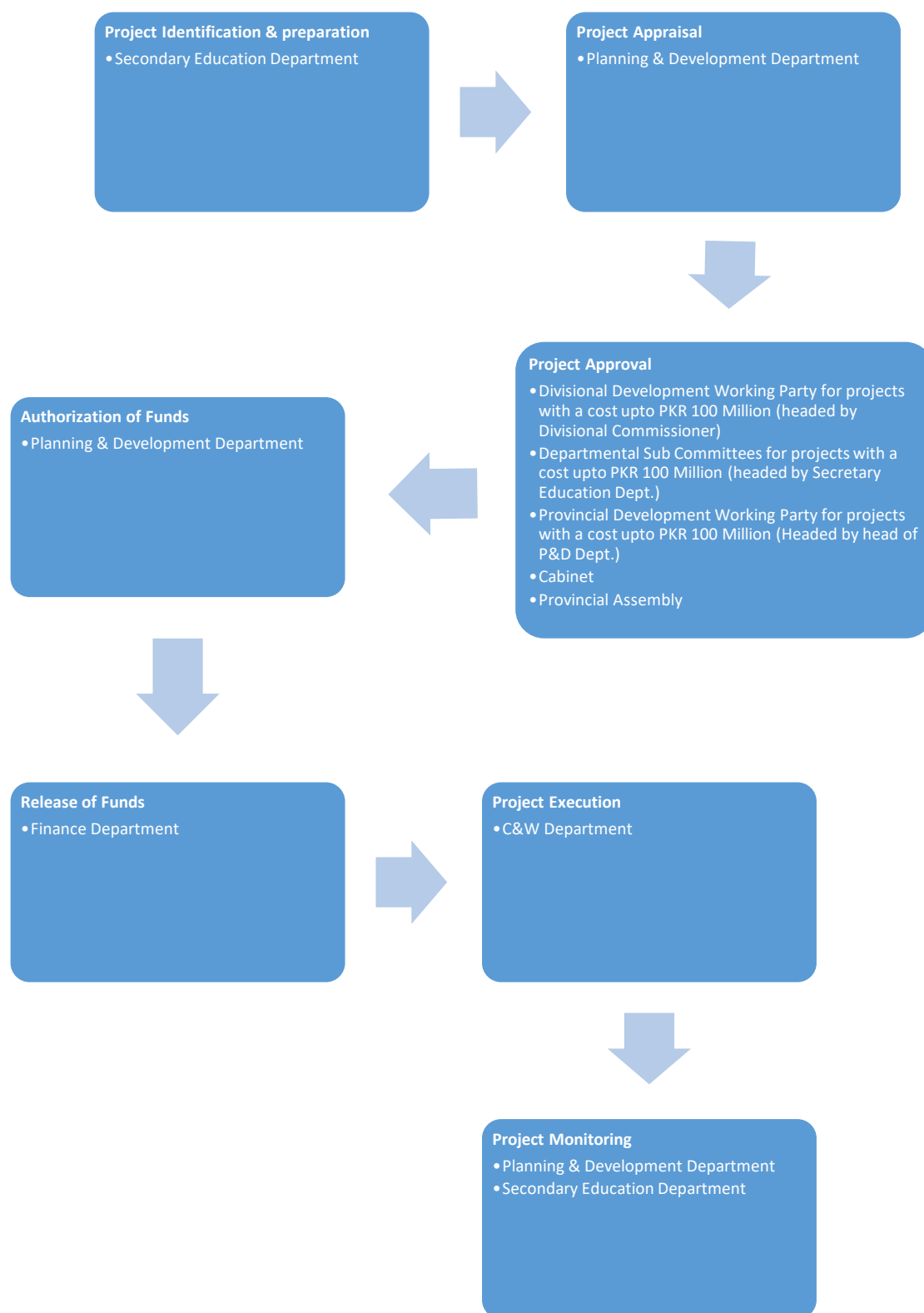
S. No	Name	Title	Organization	Type
1.	Rauf Hassan	Secretary	Secondary Education Department	Government (Education)
2.	Saboor Kakar	Chairman	Chief Minister Inspection Team	Government (ex-education; others)
3.	Afzal Khosti	Special Secretary	Finance Department	Government (Finance)
4.	Dr. Noor Muhammad	Managing Director	PPP Unit, Finance Department	Government (Finance)
5.	Rahim Mengal	Chief of Section Education	P&D Department	Government (Planning & Development)
6.	Representative	Education Section, UNICEF	UNICEF Balochistan	Non-Government Donor organization
7.	Syed Ali Shah	Journalist	Dawn Newspaper, Quetta Voice	Journalist
8.	Dr. Lal Mohd Kakar	Baz Shaheed Foundation	Civil society organization	Non-Government Organization
9.	Representative	Strategic Planning & Reforms Cell (SPRC)	P&D Department	Government (Planning & Development)
10.	Irfan Awan	Managing Director	Society	Non-Government Organization (NGO)

D. Stakeholder Mapping

There are multiple stakeholders in each relationship of the education delivery chain. At the executive level, the provincial Legislature, Cabinet, Chief Minister and Minister Secondary Education respectively have most important role with regards to approval of education policy, financial allocations and hiring. At the bureaucratic tier, the Finance Department has primary responsibility for recurrent budget and the Planning and Development Department has main responsibility and powers with regards to development (capital) budget. The Communication and Works Department usually has a key role in constructing and upgrading schools budgeted under the development budgeted.

A graphical illustration of the typical processes followed for preparing, approving and implementing a school construction project through the development budget is as follows:

Graphical Illustration of the Processes and Roles related to Development Projects for School Education



	Principals	Agents
Politics	Representative of local community engaged in school education;	Members of Provincial Assembly; Cabinet;

	Representatives of political parties ² ; Civil society organizations; Journalists ³ ; Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) ⁴ ;	Chief Minister; Minister of Education; Minister of Finance; Minister of Planning and Development; Minister of Communication and Works;
Compact	Members of Provincial Assembly; Cabinet; Chief Minister;	Minister of Secondary Education; Department of Secondary Education; Planning & Development Department; Department of Finance; Communication & Works Department;
Management	Department of Secondary Education ⁵	Policy Planning & Implementation Unit (PPIU); Performance Management Cell (PMC); Directorate of Schools (DoS); Bureau of Curriculum (BoC); Provincial Institute for Teacher Education (PITE); Balochistan Textbook Board; Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Examinations (BBISE), Balochistan Assessment & Examination Commission (BAEC), Balochistan Education Foundation (BEF), Balochistan Education Endowment Fund (BEEF); Donors (UNICEF; World Food Program; World Bank); Private Schools Association; Teachers Union; Wafaq-ul Madaris and other boards of religious seminaries; District Education Officers (DEOs);

² Political parties may possibly act as both Principals and Agents in the Politics relationship. If a political party has representation in the parliament and/or is part of the government, then it is acting as “Agent”. However, if a political party is neither in parliament nor part of the government, then it may serve as an agent as it represents and aggregates the interests of citizens (principals).

³ Journalists articulate the interests of citizens (principals) and also monitor the performance of agents.

⁴ ASER is a private organization that produces and publishes annual reports on learning outcomes. The findings of these reports provide information to citizens on the performance of Agents both in the ‘Politics’ and ‘Compact’ relationship

⁵ The Department of Secondary Education looks after education from Grade 1 to Grade 12. This is the primary organization responsible for implementing the school education agenda and vision on behalf of the Executive tier.

		Heads of High, Middle and Primary Schools; Teachers;
Voice & Choice	Parents Students	Heads of Schools Teachers

E. First Meeting of the Steering Committee

The first meeting of the Steering Committee is proposed to be convened in the second week of April. Tentative date is 14th April 2022 but this may change depending upon the availability of members. Given that April will be the month of Ramadan (fasting), the meeting is proposed to be held over Iftaar dinner.

Draft agenda of the meeting is as follows:

Agenda for the First Meeting of the Steering Committee

S. No	Agenda Item
1.	Overview of Balochistan's experience with recent reforms in the education sector
2.	Introduction to RISE Diagnostic Framework & Systems thinking
3.	Training Module on RISE Diagnostic & Interactive Discussion
4.	Briefing on the role of the Steering Committee: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. List of stakeholders will be shared for review and approval b. Draft design and plan of KIIs and stakeholder workshops will be shared for feedback c. Support of Committee members will be sought in contacting key stakeholders for KIIS and workshops d. Committee will be briefed again on the findings of the pilot project at the end e. Key priorities for future reform agenda will be shortlisted with the help of Committee members

F. Review of Relevant Documents

Government Laws, Policies, Rules & Regulations and Other related documents

The following documents will be reviewed by the diagnostic team before going into the stakeholder workshops.

- a. Balochistan Education Sector Plan 2013-18
- b. Balochistan Education Sector Plan 2020-25
- c. The Balochistan Compulsory Education Act 2014
- d. Public Sector Development Programs (PSDP) 2010-2020
- e. The Balochistan Government Rules of Business 1973 as amended in 2012
- f. The Balochistan Delegation of Financial Powers and re-appropriation rules 2019

- g. Recruitment Policy 2014 for appointment of teaching staffs of Secondary Education Department in Basic Pay Scale (5-15) excluding drivers
- h. The Balochistan Introduction of Mother Languages as Compulsory Additional Subject at Primary Level Act 2014
- i. Notification of Service rules of SSTs (Female) (Amendment) 2015
- j. Balochistan Public Procurement Regulatory Authority Rules
- k. Policies/Laws regarding changes in the management of schools, teachers' recruitment/posting/transfer/promotions/placement
- l. Policies/Laws regarding the construction of new schools, upgrading existing schools, shelter-less schools, non-functional schools
- m. Any other relevant law, rules, or policy document comes up during the document review process

Grey Literature and secondary sources

The diagnostic team will collect reports and research outputs from different bilateral and multilateral donor organizations and individual researchers on thematic areas related to education systems. These may include but are not limited to the following thematic areas.

- a. Political economy analysis of education sector reforms
- b. Budget analysis of the education sector
- c. System mapping of education sectors
- d. Project appraisal documents and system reform projects, especially of UNICEF, World Bank, and European Union, whose involvement with education sector reforms in the province of Balochistan is quite extensive

G. Preliminary Diagnostic Analysis & Identification of Gaps & Stakeholders

(Internal Simulation Exercise)

The diagnostic team for this exercise will conduct a preliminary internal systems analysis to identify areas of consensus and areas where further information may be required. The diagnostic team will fill the RISE "5*4 framework" for the following three main reforms and interventions:

- Construction of new public schools between 2013 and 2018
- Introduction of mother languages as compulsory subjects
- Real Time School Monitoring system

Annexures 4, 5, and 6 on compact, management, voice, and choice respectively will be filled in by mutual understanding by the diagnostic team members as part of desk review. The exercise will describe each element and sub-elements as per the team members' understanding with reasoning and justification for a particular description. The exercise will also highlight outstanding questions and missing information in annexures 4, 5, and 6. The missing information will be obtained later through KIIs and stakeholders' workshops.

A detailed plan for KIIs and Stakeholder workshops will be developed after the internal simulation and diagnostic exercise is undertaken. Diagnostic team members will finalize the

names of Key Informants and participants for stakeholders' workshops to discuss each element and sub-element for improving systems understanding.

H. First Round of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Given that many people will be unavailable for participating in workshop in the month of April and first half of May due to Ramadan and Eid, it is proposed that few Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) may be conducted before stakeholder workshops. These KIIs will help fill key gaps in the internal simulation and diagnostic exercise. KIIs will be identified through purposive sampling method.

I. Organization of Stakeholder Workshops

After the preliminary diagnostic exercise by the diagnostic team and initial round of KIIs, preparations will be made for organizing stakeholder workshops. The areas where more clarification and information is needed will be addressed in stakeholders' workshop. Possible answers will be sought from the more informed stakeholders in the workshops for each sub-element in each table on compact, management, and voice & choice. Moreover, after articulating the description for each sub-element, the diagnostic team will consult Annexure 7 for articulating the common incoherencies within and between elements. These two will be then brought to stakeholders' workshops for finding answers.

Two workshops will be organized in Quetta. The first workshop will focus exclusively on the construction of new schools and involve all relevant stakeholders associated with new schools. The second workshop will involve stakeholders related to mother languages and RTSM system. The workshops will tentatively be organized in the 3rd and 4th weeks of May 2022.

Identification of Individuals to attend individual workshops.

The diagnostic team will identify members for each workshop from the overall stakeholders' list while working on spreadsheets 4, 5, and 6 at the desk review. This selection of team members for a particular workshop will depend on the focus of the topic and the type of questions to be answered. The basic purpose of each workshop is to ensure that every row in the three spreadsheets of compact, management, and voice & choice is being adequately answered. The diagnostic team will ensure the inclusion of the more informed participants from each category of stakeholders.

Engaging the Stakeholders- How?

The maximum size of workshops will be 10 participants. The workshop will be more like a focus group or technical working group with active participation from each member. The diagnostic team will ensure open discussion on topics so that candid opinions can be solicited. Local

officials/other stakeholders' members at the district level will be brought to the provincial capital. If needed, separate workshops will be carried out with district-level stakeholders to solicit answers on questions faced at the local level.

Materials & Logistics for the Workshops

Annexures 4, 5, and 6 will be contextualized and amended for each workshop by the diagnostic team. The diagnostic team will focus on the sub-elements and relationships that need to be covered in each workshop and find answers for the previously inconclusive questions in the desk review phase.

For productive workshops, an enabling environment will be provided to all participants so that they can freely express their views and thoughts on the relationships in each sub-element.

Roles & Responsibilities for Conducting Workshops

Facilitators and co-facilitators: A member from the diagnostic team will serve as a facilitator who will lead the overall workshop. The facilitator will be supported by 3 co-facilitators from the diagnostic team, who will provide support and guidance to individual participants during the workshop. **Rafiullah Kakar, Abdus Sami, Barkat Shah, Muhammad Saleem** will serve as facilitators and co-facilitators at separate workshops

Note taker: Muhammad Saleem & Bilal Sarwar from the Diagnostic team will serve as note-takers to record the most important insights from the workshop.

Administrative and logistics coordinator: Naseeb Ullah and an administrative assistant will provide all administrative and logistic help.

Draft Agenda for the Workshops

Part 1: Describe how the crisis of out-of-school children has persisted despite significant public investments in construction of new schools (Workshop 1). Furthermore, presentation on causal links in education delivery chain will be given through problem trees and other tools.

Part 2: Based on the RISE material, the diagnostic team will explain the RISE diagnostic framework to the workshop participants. Key points will include the following;-

- a. The existence of multiple actors in the education system who are involved in the delivery of education services. These actors interact with each other through complex relationships. The feedback loops of these relationships determine the outcomes of the system
- b. The alignment of these relationships to produce a certain outcome
- c. Gaps between de jure and de facto functions of the system and common incoherencies.

Part 3: Introduce sub-elements rows and their types to the workshop participants in annexures 4, 5 & 6.

- a. Provide a worksheet to each participant with details of that particular sub-element
- b. Ask each participant to circle the elements of each sub-element they consider best describe their system
- c. Ask participants to give reasons for their selection
- d. All group members will be convened to build a consensus which will be facilitated by the diagnostic team based on their description of annexures 4, 5, & 6 during their desk review exercise
- e. The process will be repeated for other sub-elements
- f. Annexure 9 of the RISE diagnostic will be adapted to each workshop

Part 5: Identification of coherence & incoherence in the relationships.

- a. The diagnostic team will select a segment of the 5X4 framework, share it with the workshop participants, and ask them to identify any incoherence within and between these segments. Annexure 10 will be adapted for this segment of the discussion. The participants will complete these on their own.
- b. At the second stage, the facilitator will gather all members' identification of incoherence and facilitate further discussion to build a consensus.

Part 6: Conclusion of the workshop with a timeline for analysis and report sharing with the workshop participants.

Part 7: The diagnostic team will compare their notes from the desk review analysis with the workshop conclusions and reconcile different understandings of the system. Side questions after the workshop too will be carried out to resort to individual interviews later less frequently.

Workshop Deliverables

- a. Each workshop will produce two deliverables as per annexure 9 (sub-element worksheet), and Annexure 10 (incoherence worksheet) adapted to each workshop. These deliverables will be produced from part 4 and part 5 of the workshop.
- b. The deliverable for Part 4 should be an overview table or document that lists all the sub-elements discussed during the workshop and notes each unique opinion or perspective on that element and its associated justification.
- c. The deliverable for Part 5 should be a list of major incoherencies identified by workshop participants, their justifications for highlighting this incoherence, and any points of dissent surrounding each incoherence that emerged during the discussion.
- d. Note-taker notes and handouts collected from the participants will guide producing the deliverables.
- e. The deliverables should include
 - I. Notable quotes from the discussion
 - II. Brief discussion of key conclusions of overall element and relationship alignment
 - III. Dissenting points emerged in the discussion

1. Follow-up Key Informant Interviews

Workshops are likely to have two major limitations: First, various stakeholders might be reluctant to openly express their views about various relationships in the system in an open setting. Secondly, participants, especially government officers, may find it difficult to understand and process the diagnostic tool and fill the same in one setting. Better approach will be for members of the diagnostic team to provide hand-holding support and help various stakeholders fill the form. Alternatively, members of the diagnostic team, may fill these forms on behalf of the key stakeholder during the workshop or in one-to-one interview setting.

Follow up interviews will be conducted only if critical information remained missing after initial round of interviews and stakeholder workshops or if:

- a. Strong differences emerged during stakeholders' workshops
- b. To further investigate de jure vs. de facto distinctions.

J. Analysis and Writing

- a. Compilation of all incoherencies identified at each stage with descriptions
- b. Annexure 12 will be used for documenting and summarizing each relationship and sub-element of each relationship
- c. Using annexure 13, all incoherencies are identified at each stage (desk review, stakeholders' workshops, interviews, and diagnostic teams' observation will be listed with justification and suggested principals for intervention.

K. Concluding Meeting with Steering Committee

The diagnostic team will share the outcome of the diagnostic exercise with the steering committee, possibly in a presentation, inviting all the committee members.

Two or three incoherencies will be identified as the main priorities for the intervention to be decided by the steering committee. The Steering Committee will decide on recommendations for principles for intervention to address these incoherencies.

L. Final Report

A 10-page report will be produced, which will include the following.

1. An overview of each accountability relationship and the alignment or alignments that best describe it, with justifications from each element (i.e., drawing from the Analysis described in Annex 13).
2. An overview of the incoherencies that the steering committee chose, the evidence for these, and a justification for why they were chosen.
3. Recommendations identified by the steering committee for addressing these incoherencies.
4. Any high-level conclusions or analysis of the system that emerged from the Diagnostic, which the team feels would be beneficial to include.

Appendices with Final Report

1. A description of the organizations that make up the principal and agent of each relationship.
2. The summary tables for analysis of each relationship (i.e., the completed Annex 13 or its equivalent for each relationship).
3. The comprehensive list of incoherencies (i.e., the completed Annex 13) from which the Steering Committee selected their priorities.

5. Dissemination

The final findings of the pilot study will be disseminated among relevant stakeholders with the following two objectives in mind: a) To make all stakeholders them familiar with the tool; b) To sensitize senior policy makers, especially political parties, about the unhealthy role of politics and the potential and options for a more healthy political support for education. While the bureaucratic tier will be engaged through the forum of steering committee, the representatives of political parties will be engaged in a formal roundtable seminar on the state of education in the province and the role politics.

6. Proposed Timeline & Gantt Chart

Period	Activities
Feb-March 2022	Contracting finalized Training and preparation RISE team and local partner discuss the proposal, adapt, and amend as needed, proceed with contracting An informal introduction to government counterparts Getting government approval and introduction letters
March-April 2022	Desk review Developing instruments for data collection Preliminary diagnostic exercise conducted Initial Key Informant Interviews conducted
April- May 2022	Engaging stakeholders Consultative workshops planned and conducted
May-June 2022	Review data from workshops and desk reviews Preparation of key findings to share with the steering committee Analysis of findings including key actors, relationships alignments, and incoherencies Preparation of briefing materials Follow-up KIIs may be held if required
June-July 2022	Meetings and workshops with the steering committee to share findings Final report write up including feedback from workshops A blog detailing experience of the pilot from the organization perspective

S. No	Activities	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
1	Orientation & Training Sessions							
2	Contract Signing							
3	Inception Report							
4	Internal Simulation & Preliminary Diagnostic							
5	First Meeting of Steering Committee							
6	First Round of Key Informant Interviews							
7	First Stakeholder Workshop							
8	Second Stakeholder Workshop							
9	Final Round of Key Informant Interviews							
10	Analysis & Writing							
11	Second Meeting of Steering Committee							
12	Final Report							

1

Example materials from the inception phase

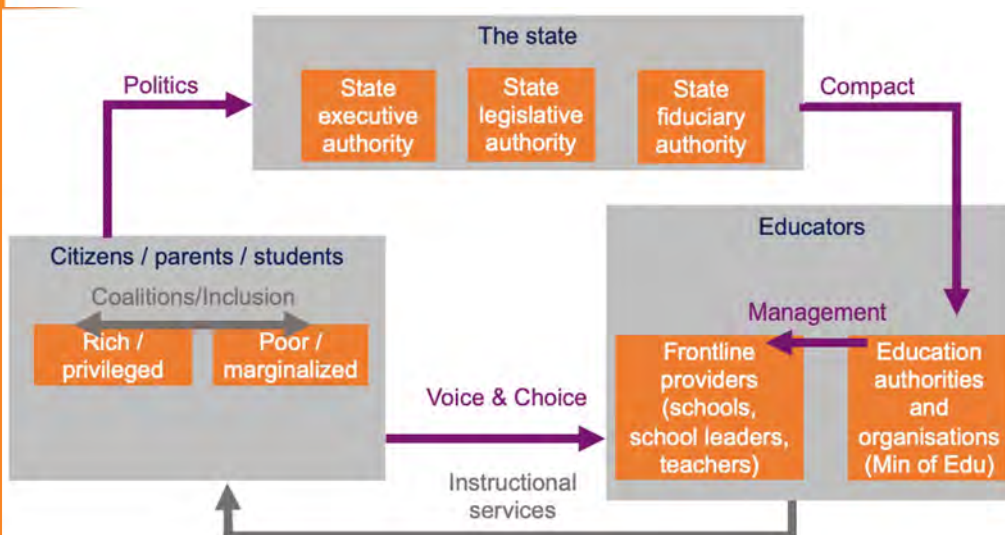
Introductory slide deck by the **Global School Leaders** team from their diagnostic pilot in **GSL partner** **countries**



Education Officer System Diagnostic

1

RISE Accountability Framework



RISE Accountability Framework aims to understand education systems to identify enablers and constraints to progress and to determine priorities for reform in an education system.

2

Five design elements of RISE Accountability Framework

Delegation	What the principal asks the agent to do.
Finance	Resources principal provides to the agent to carry out the tasks
Support	Assistance and training principal provides to the agent to do their job. In education refers exclusively to teacher training, pre and in service.
Information	Information that principal uses to evaluate agents performance.
Motivation	Ways in which agent's welfare is contingent on their performance against objectives. Can be extrinsic (mediated by principal) or intrinsic (mediated by agent).

3

Five design elements of RISE Accountability Framework

Five design elements of each relationship of accountability (Principal (P) to Agent (A))	Principal - Agent Relationships			
	Politics: Citizens and the highest authorities of the state	Compact: Highest authority of the State to Education authority	Management: Education authorities and schools, school leaders, and teachers	Voice & Choice: parents/children and schools/school leaders/ teachers
Delegation: what principal wants agent to do.				
Finance: resources principal allocates to agent.				
Support: preparation and assistance that principal provides to agent.				
Information: how principal asses agent's performance				
Motivation: How principal motivates agent.				
Performance of the system is the result of the feedback loops and relationships between the actors				

4

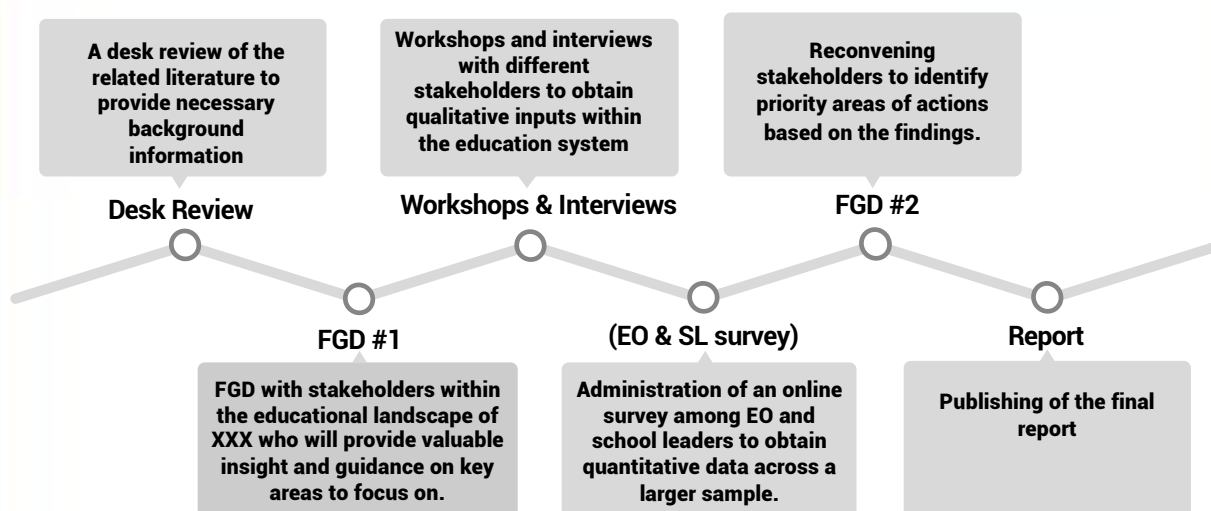
Objectives for System Diagnostic in XXX

We will adapt the RISE framework to study the relationships between different elements within the education ecosystem in XXX, from the vantage point of Education Officers (EOs). Through this we hope to:

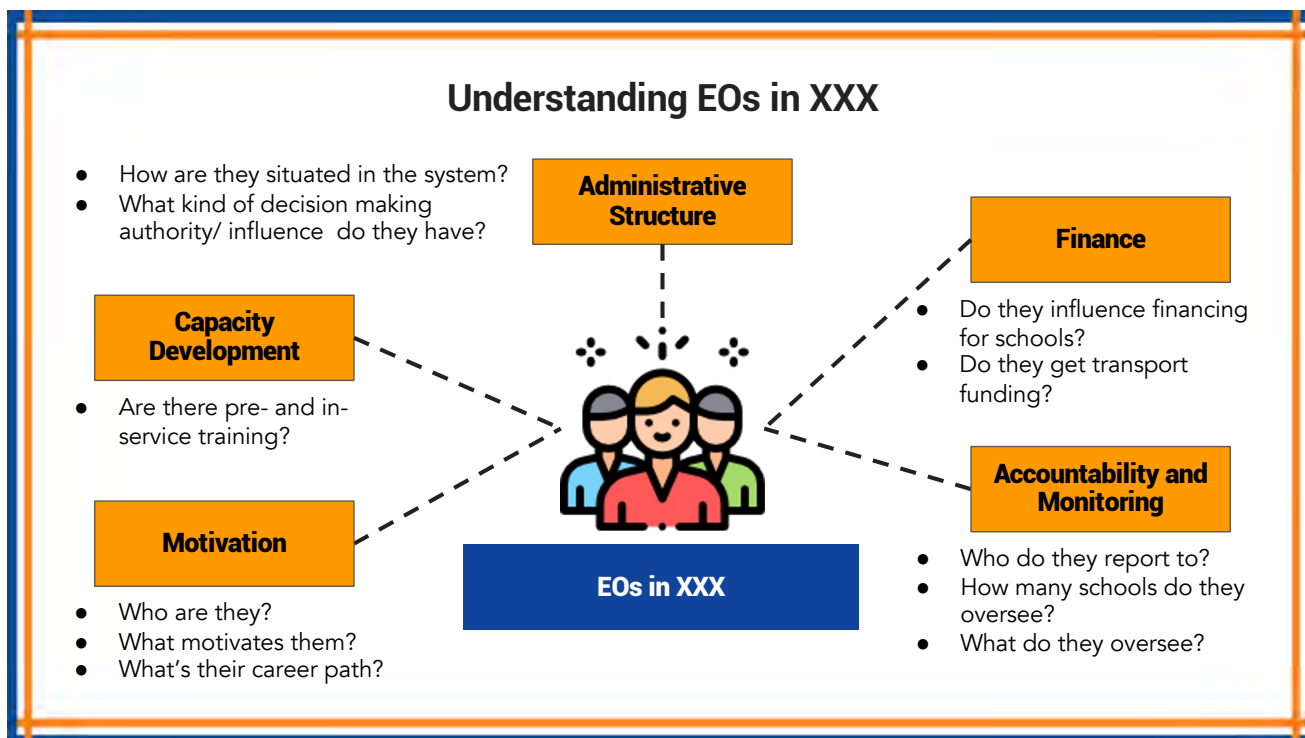
1. Understand the system EOs are embedded in XXX and conditions that enable or constrain them from supporting school leaders (SLs) in prioritising teaching and learning.
2. Identify and provide recommendations of policies that can improve EOs ability to better support school leaders to become instructional leaders.

5

Activities for Systems Diagnostics in XXX



6



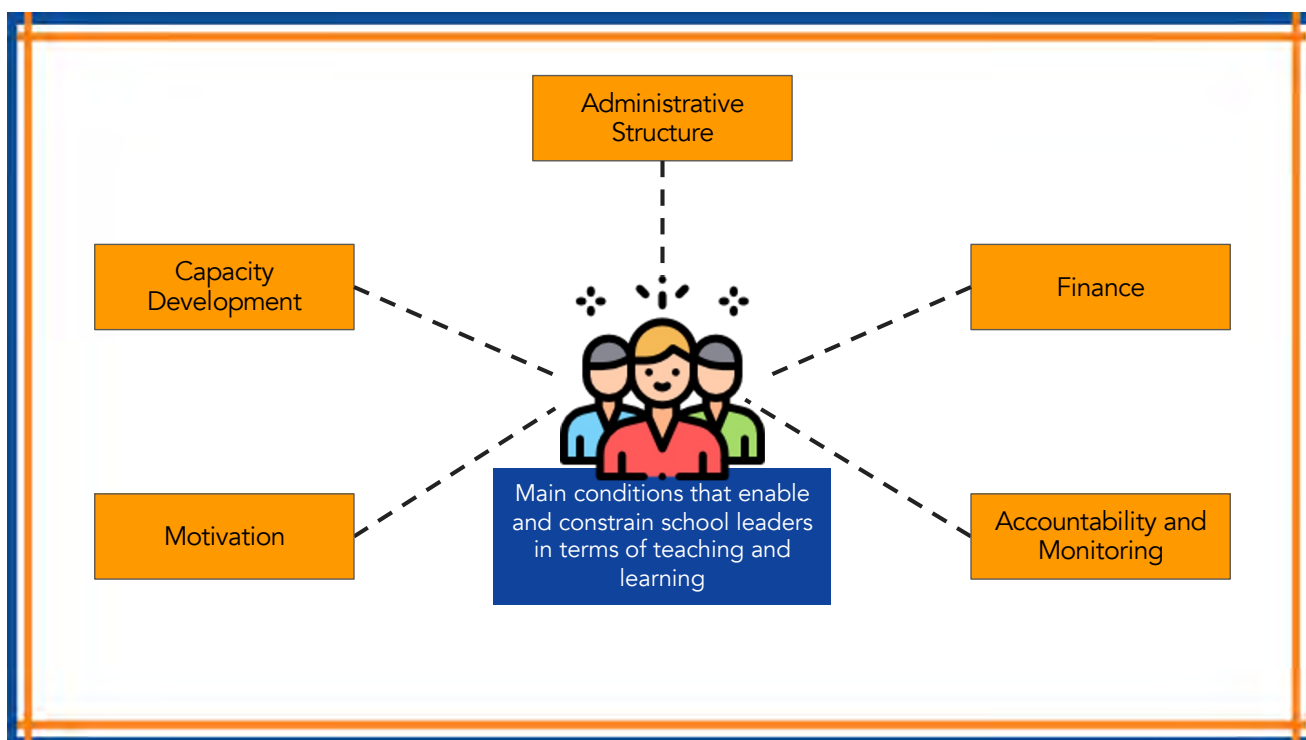
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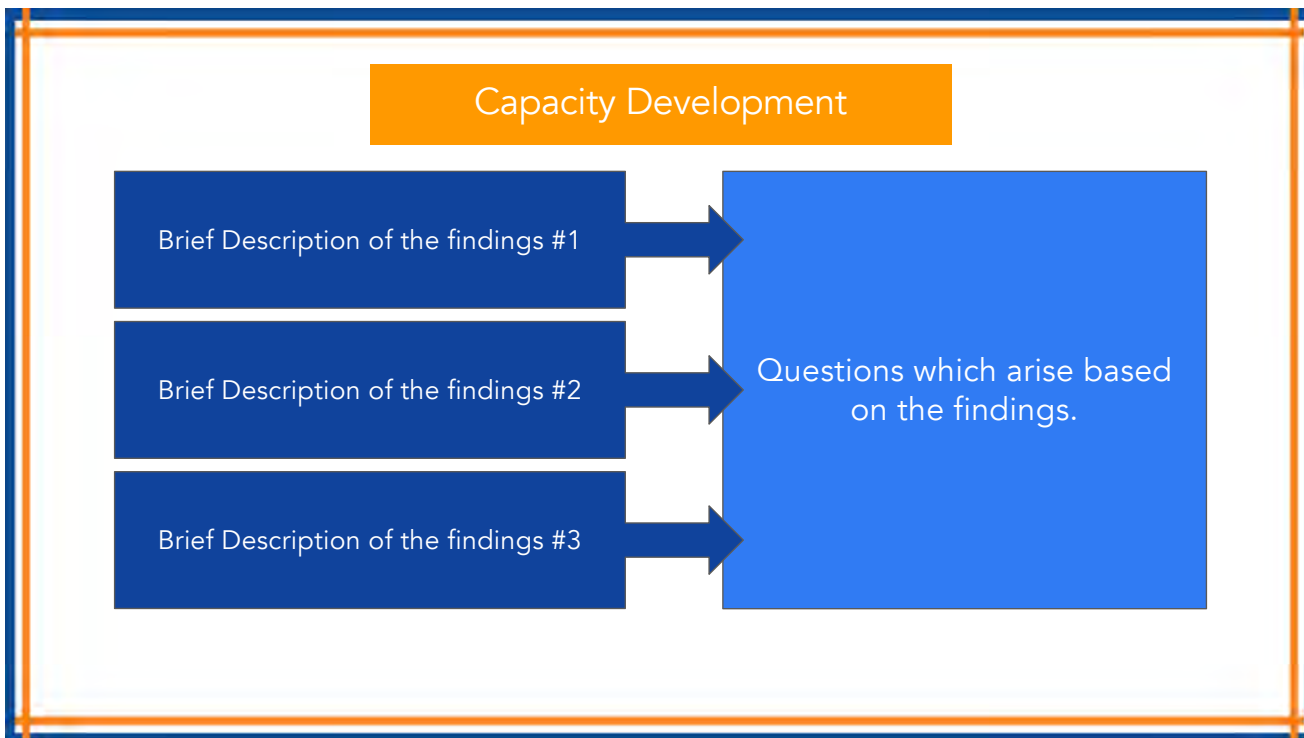
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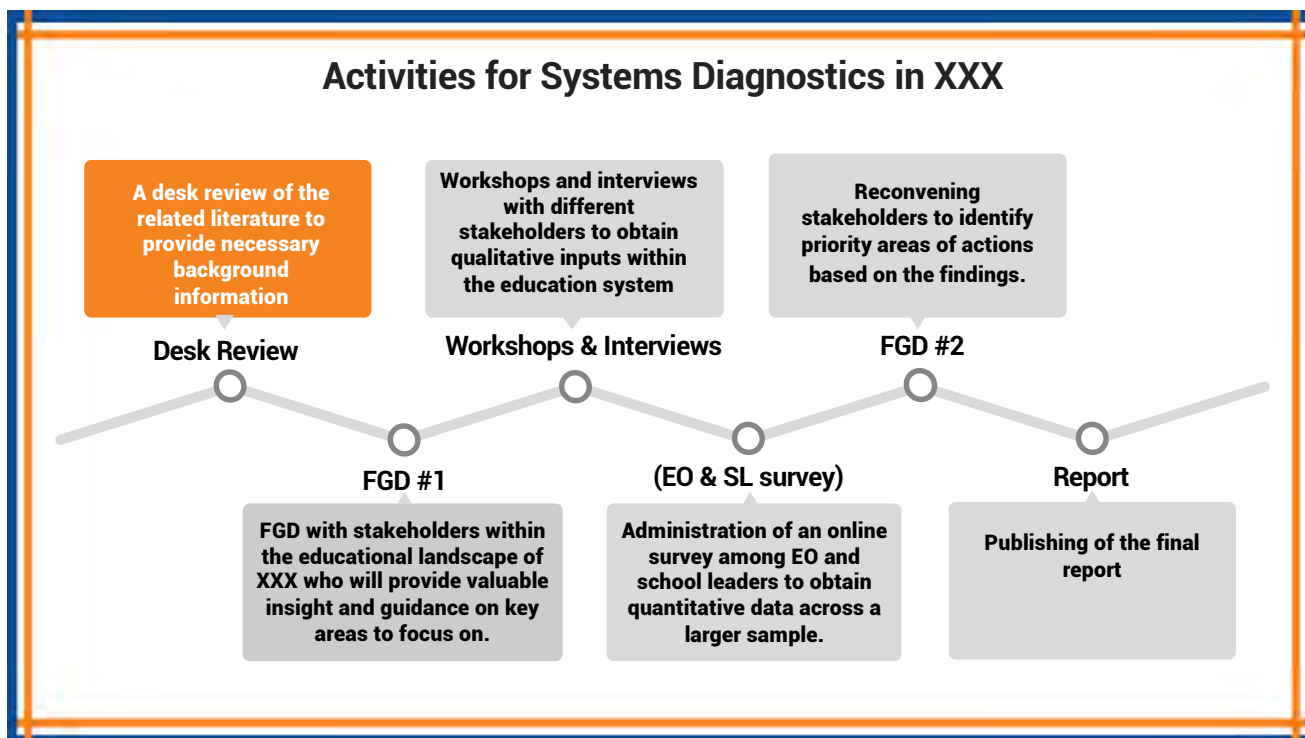
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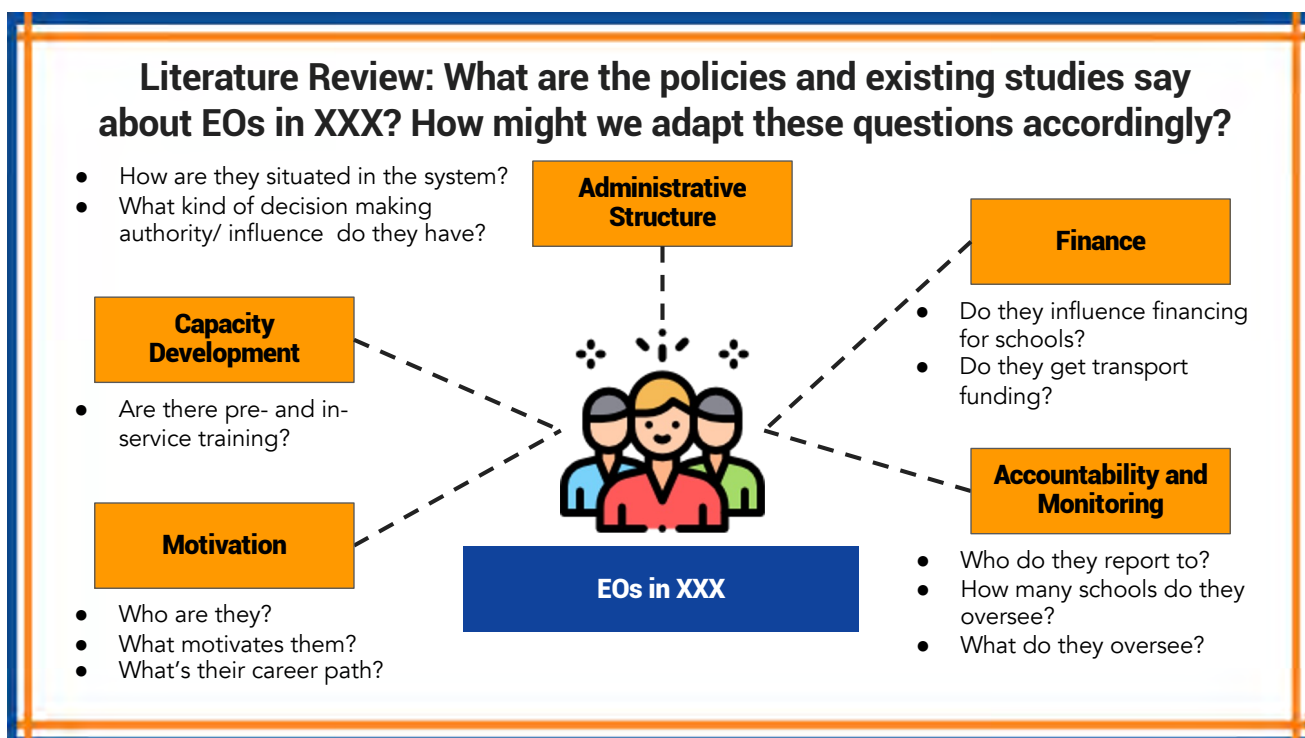
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EO System Diagnostic: Next Steps

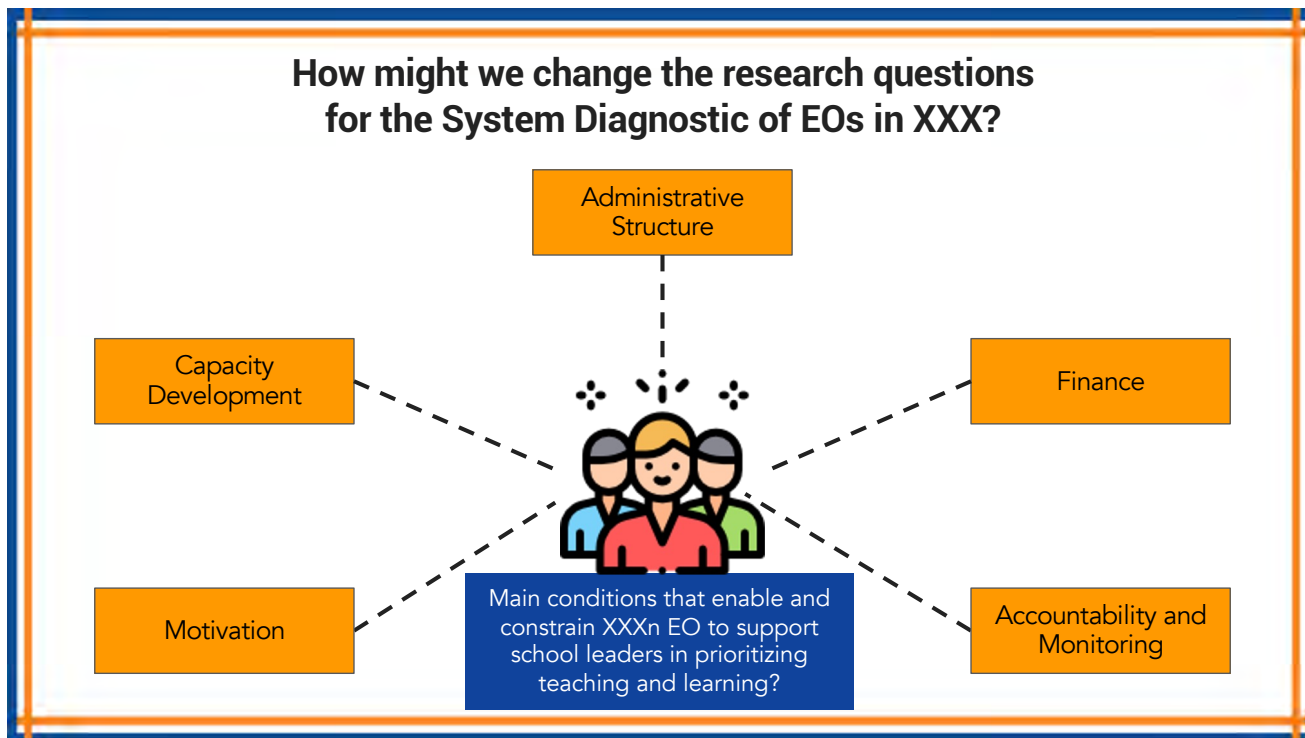
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13



14



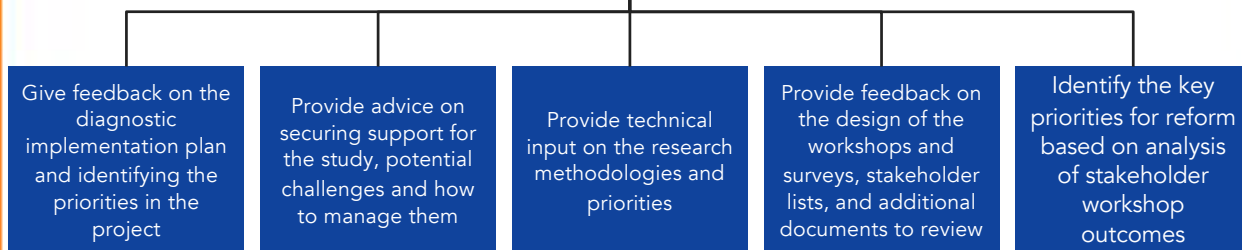
15



16

Do we need a Technical Advisory Committee?

Roles of the TAC



In addition to the two meetings with the Steering Committee, the Technical Advisory Committee will also meet during certain key milestones of the study

17

Thank you!

18

2

Example materials from the desk review phase

Desk review report by the **SUMMA** team from their diagnostic pilot in **Ecuador**

Desk Review Report

RISE Education Systems Diagnostic Framework Pilot Project

The case of Ecuador

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Introduction

The following document accounts for the desk review based on the description of the organisations that makeup principal and agent of each relationship of the RISE Systems Framework applied to the education system of Ecuador based on the document **Implementing the RISE Education Systems Diagnostic** from February 2022.

The first section of this document presents the general institutional characteristics of relationships: politics, compact, management and voice and choice. In the description of each relationship there is a characterisation of the agent and principal based on official institutional information that allows to map the positioning of each actor in each rol based on the relationship. The information presented here is the result of a desk review of official and institutional documents that account for 'de jure' standpoints of each of the actors. In the second section there is an exercise of looking into the outcomes of the desk review to map the *alignments* based on the 4x5 framework presented by RISE. Lastly, the former part of this report proposes a hypothesis based on the desk review that will be tested in the workshops.

Stakeholder map

The most relevant stakeholders based on each relation established by the RISE Framework for the Ecuadorian education system are¹:

Key Stakeholders in the Politics Relation

Function*	Organization(s)	Organizational position in the RISE Framework (principal or agent in which relationship)
Citizens		Principal
President of Republic	Presidency-Executive	Agent
President of National Assembly	National Assembly-Legislative	Agent
Attorney General	Attorney General-Judicial	Agent
Comptroller General	Comptroller General- Social Control and Transparency	Agent
The Ombudsman: observance of the fundamental rights that this Constitution guarantees	The Ombudsman's Office - Social Control and Transparency	Agent
President of the National Electoral Council	Electoral	Agent

Key Stakeholders in the Compact Relation

Function*	Organization(s)	Organizational position in the RISE Framework (principal or agent in which relationship)
Minister of Education:PK-12 education system rectory	Ministry of Education	Principal/ Agent: local authorities
National Secretary of Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation	SENESCYT	Principal/ Agent: local authorities
Director of National Institute of Educational Evaluation	INEVAL	Principal/ Agent: local authorities
National Secretary of Planning and Development: the programming and execution of the State budget	SENPLADES	Principal/ Agent: Ministry of Education, Finances, Labour
Central Bank: The formulation of monetary, credit, exchange, and Finance	Central Bank	Principal/ Agent: Public and private banks
Minister of Finance: budget allocation	Ministry of Finance	Principal/ Agent: Ministry of Education. Local authorities
Minister of Labour: compliance with labour laws	Ministry of Labour	Principal/ Local authorities

¹ This can be found in Annex 2 of the excel document provided by RISE

Key Stakeholders in the Management Relation

Function*	Organization(s)	Organizational position in the RISE Framework (principal or agent in which relationship)
General Financial Administrative Coordination: Budget and human resources	Ministry of Education	Agent of Minister/ Principal of Ministry authorities
Secretary of the Bilingual Intercultural Education System: Indigenous and afro descendant communities	Ministry of Education	Agent of Minister/ Principal of Ministry authorities
Vice ministry of Education: one focused on Education (in pedagogical terms)	Ministry of Education	Agent of Minister/ Principal of Ministry authorities
Undersecretary for Education Foundations: Curriculum, standards, research	Ministry of Education	Agent of Vice minister of Education/ Principal of local authorities
Undersecretary for Good Living: Education for democracy and innovation	Ministry of Education	Agent of Vice minister of Education/ Principal of local authorities
Undersecretary for Teachers Professional Development and Training	Ministry of Education	Agent of Vice minister of Education/ Principal of local authorities
Vice ministry of Education Management: Resource management, support and monitoring, and curriculum implementation	Ministry of Education	Agent of Minister of Education/ Principal of Ministry authorities
Undersecretary for Support, Monitoring and Regulation	Ministry of Education	Agent of Vice minister of Education Management/ Principal of local authorities
Undersecretary of School's Administration: Resources and infrastructure	Ministry of Education	Agent of Vice minister of Education Management/ Principal of local authorities
Undersecretary for Special and Inclusive Education: Implements curriculum in all modalities and levels	Ministry of Education	Agent of Vice minister of Education Management/ Principal of local authorities

Key Stakeholders in the Voice and Choice Relation

Function*	Organization(s)	Organizational position in the RISE Framework (principal or agent in which relationship)
Citizens: Community, parents, students	Constitution. Ministry of Education	Principal - Politics
School Principals	Ministry of Education	Agent of Minister of Education and Agent of citizens/ Principal of teachers
Teachers	Ministry of Education	Agent of Minister of Education
Frontline providers	Ministry of Education	Agent of Minister of Education

Forming the Steering Committee

After the stakeholder map concluded, a careful consideration process and internal discussion about the Steering Committee (SC) took place. The criteria used to conform the SC was to contain a diversity of participants in terms of the background experience, their area of expertise (within the education sector) and the diversity in viewpoints and experiences of the system. Thus, the 15 members selected represent were chosen from the following categories:

- Government education sector authorities
- Academia
- Civil society: Research centres
- Civil society: Advocacy
- Civil society: Teacher unions
- Civil society: Private and religious schools
- Civil society: Indigenous education experts
- International organisations
- Schools' leadership

The Steering Committee is constituted as follows:

No.	Name	Title	Organization	Type*
1	Minister or delegate	Minister or delegate	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education
2	Doris Guamán	Undersecretariat for Support, Monitoring and Regulation of Education (SASRE)	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education
3	María Fernanda Saenz	Financial Administrative Coordinator (CAF)	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education
4	Gary Pulla	Zonal Directorate of Professional Development	Ministry of Education (Zone 5)	Ministry of Education
5	Enrique Pérez	Zonal Directorate of Professional Development	Ministry of Education (Zone 9)	Ministry of Education
6	Néstor Grefa	FOIN quichua amazonico Napo Educational technician	Federación de Organizaciones Indígenas de Napo FOIN	Civil Society/Indigenous Community
7	Susana Araujo	Standards Director INEVAL/Directora Ineval	INEVAL (National Institute of Educational Evaluation)	INEVAL
8	Lizbeth Pérez	Director of Doctoral Education	Universidad Espiritu Santo (UESS)	Higher education
9	Rebeca Castellanos	Principal	Universidad Nacional de Educación (UNAE)	Higher education
10	Cesar Chiriboga	Union leader	13 de April	Teacher Union leader
11	Patricio Crespo	Consultant for Dialogues for Citizenship -EU	ESQUEL - (UE)	Civil Society / NGO
12	Sergio Carneros	Director educacion	Unidos por la Educacion	Civil Society / Private Sector
13	Eduardo Ramírez	Director of Religious Trust School La Salle	La Salle	Civil Society / Religious Education
14	Luana Marotta	Senior Economist BID	Inter-American Development Bank	International Agency
15	Nelsy Lizarazo	General Coordinator CLADE	CLADE Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación (Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education)	Civil society / Social Protection

This was followed by sending a formal letter of invitation to the SC where a form of consent was included and for each member to accept being part of the Pilot Project in Ecuador. Hereby examples of the documents aforementioned:

Example of letter of invitation to participate in the Steering Committee

 <p>Laboratorio de Investigación e Innovación en Educación para América Latina y el Caribe</p>	<p>El Comité Asesor del proyecto piloto estará conformado por diversos actores que representan estamentos cruciales dentro de la sociedad, y cuyas funciones dentro del sistema educativo ecuatoriano pueden tener un impacto fundamental, desde su esfera de acción, en mejorar la realidad educativa del país. Con su participación activa se busca que el Comité trabaje colaborativamente con el equipo de investigación, analizando los resultados del proceso de diagnóstico y ayudando a ofrecer recomendaciones sobre los principales desafíos que el sistema educativo ecuatoriano debería priorizar. Su representación, por lo tanto, será muy importante para alcanzar los objetivos del proyecto.</p> <p>Hemos elaborado un cronograma que contempla tres reuniones virtuales del Comité Asesor, previstas para los meses de abril, junio y julio (una reunión por mes).</p> <p>Estamos muy entusiasmados con su posible participación. Para nosotros es un honor contar con su experiencia, sus conocimientos y su visión del proceso de construcción de la educación que todos y todas deseamos para el Ecuador.</p> <p>Si está interesado(a) en formar parte del Comité Asesor del Proyecto Piloto RISE, por favor ayúdenos firmando la hoja de confirmación, anexa a esta invitación.</p> <p>Gracias por su atención. Cordialmente,</p>  <p>Javier González, PhD. Director de SUMMA</p>
<p>Quito, abril 4 de 2022</p> <p>Señor Rector Eduardo Ramírez Director Colegio La Salle Ciudad</p> <p>Estimado Dr. Ramírez:</p> <p>Teniendo en cuenta su compromiso y estrecha vinculación con la educación del país, nos complace invitarlo a participar en un proyecto de investigación piloto, inédito en Ecuador, en calidad de miembro activo del Comité Asesor, pieza fundamental de esta iniciativa.</p> <p>Este proyecto de investigación, que será dirigido e implementado por SUMMA (Laboratorio de Investigación e Innovación en Educación para América Latina y el Caribe), aplicará una metodología de diagnóstico basada en el pensamiento sistémico, la cual ha sido diseñada y desarrollada por RISE (<i>Research on Improving Systems of Education</i>) –iniciativa alojada en la Universidad de Oxford–. Si bien esta metodología ha sido ya implementada en varios países del mundo, esta será la primera vez que se aplicará en Latinoamérica.</p> <p>El objetivo principal del estudio es buscar responder a la pregunta de por qué, a pesar de los esfuerzos del país en invertir en la mejora de la educación, los resultados de aprendizajes de los estudiantes siguen siendo insuficientes y marcadamente desiguales.</p> <p>Como sabemos, según el índice de pobreza educativa del Banco Mundial titulado <i>Ending learning poverty: What will it take?</i> (2019) y otros estudios regionales (ERCE, 2022), se evidencia un déficit alarmante a nivel mundial sobre el desempeño escolar, el cual se manifiesta en la baja capacidad de comprensión lectora y, por ende, de desempeño académico de niños, niñas y jóvenes. De acuerdo con el índice de pobreza educativa, Ecuador mostraba, antes de la pandemia, que 63% de los estudiantes no podían leer y comprender un relato simple a los diez años, estimación que podría llegar a 70% en la actualidad. La investigación que llevaremos a cabo intentará comprender y dar pistas sobre posibles estrategias de mejora a este problema, mediante el análisis de las relaciones que inciden en la coherencia de los distintos componentes que estructuran el sistema educativo ecuatoriano, desde una perspectiva holística.</p>	
 <p>Laboratorio de Investigación e Innovación en Educación para América Latina y el Caribe</p>	
<p>CONFIRMACIÓN DE PARTICIPACIÓN COMO MIEMBRO DEL COMITÉ ASESOR (Proyecto Piloto RISE en Ecuador de implementación de Pensamiento Sistémico en Educación)</p>	
<p>Fecha: 07 de abril de 2022</p> <p>Yo, Eduardo Fabricio Ramírez Coronel, Rector de la Unidad Educativa Particular La Salle Conocoto, confirmo mi participación activa en las sesiones del Comité Asesor, el cual tiene como objetivos:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Fomentar la aplicación del pensamiento sistémico en la investigación del sector educativo.2) Discutir las líneas generales de acción del proyecto, así como sus enfoques.3) Discutir y priorizar las incoherencias encontradas en función de la presentación del equipo investigador. <p>Además, me comprometo a respetar la solicitud de Reserva de la Información y Confidencialidad: Toda información que sea facilitada o generada durante las sesiones del Comité Asesor debe ser considerada como INFORMACIÓN RESERVADA DE SUMMA y RISE, y no podrá ser revelada ante ninguna otra persona o entidad hasta que finalice el proceso de investigación basado en pensamiento sistémico en el ámbito educativo ecuatoriano. De igual forma, hasta que el documento de Informe final haya sido aprobado por RISE (<i>Research on Improving Systems of Education</i>) y SUMMA (Laboratorio de investigación e innovación en educación en América Latina y el Caribe).</p> <p>Firma:</p> 	
<p>Anexo a invitación como miembro del Comité Asesor</p>	

Once the confirmation and consent letters were received, the first meeting of the SC took place on April 22 of 2022, where the RISE Framework was presented and the workshop's plan was discussed with the SC members.



Document review

The following document review looks into government policy documents, as well as grey literature and secondary source material that allows to understand the context of the Ecuadorian Education System. The information was systematised following the relations proposed by the RISE Framework. Here a description of the documents revised:

List of documents consulted

Autor / Organización	Título	Año	Carpeta en Desk Review
Secretaría Nacional de Planificación y Desarrollo	Plan de creación de Oportunidades 2021-2025	2021	Gobierno
Presidencia de la República de Ecuador	Proforma del presupuesto general del Estado 2022-2025	2021	Gobierno
Secretaría Nacional de Planificación y Desarrollo -	Plan de Creación de Oportunidades 2021-2025 -	2021	Gobierno
Presidencia de la República de Ecuador	Proforma del presupuesto general del Estado 2022-2025 -	2021	Gobierno

Secretaría Nacional de Planificación y Desarrollo -	La desconcentración del Ejecutivo en el Ecuador. El Estado en el territorio y la recuperación de lo público	2014	Gobierno
INEVAL	Rendición de cuentas	2021	Gobierno
Asamblea Constituyente del Ecuador.	Constitución de la República del Ecuador. [PDF].	2008	Asamblea
Corte Constitucional.	Constitución y Estado ecuatoriano No.1. Programa de divulgación constitucional con la ciudadanía.	2011	Asamblea
Registro Oficial.	Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural. [PDF].	(2011, marzo 31).	Asamblea
Ministerio de Educación	REFORMA LOEI LEY ORGANICA DE EDUCACION INTERCULTURAL 2021		Asamblea
Ministerio de Educación	Literal a1- Organigrama de la Institución Estructura Orgánica Funcional	2022	MINEDUC Periodo 2021-2022
Ministerio de Educación	Literal G – Presupuesto de la Institución	2022	MINEDUC Periodo 2021-2022
Ministerio de Educación	Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Cinco ejes de trabajo 20 líneas de acción	2022	MINEDUC Periodo 2021-2022
Ministerio de Educación	Rendición de Cuentas 2021	2022	MINEDUC Periodo 2021-2022
Ministerio de Educación	Rendición de Cuentas 2020	2020	MINEDUC Periodo previo mayo 2021
Monserrat Creamer	Ensayo Los futuros de la educación: hacia un plan estratégico de la educación ecuatoriana		MINEDUC Periodo previo mayo 2021
Ministerio de Educación	Los futuros de la educación	2021	MINEDUC Periodo previo mayo 2021
Ministerio de Educación	ACUERDO Nro. MINEDUC-ME-2016-00020-A Plan de Estudios	2016	MINEDUC Periodo previo mayo 2021
Ministerio de Educación	ACUERDO Nro. MINEDUC-MINEDUC-2018-00089-A REFORMAS AL ACUERDO MINISTERIAL No. MINEDUC-ME-2016-00020-A de 17 de febrero de 2016	2018	MINEDUC Periodo previo mayo 2021
Ministerio de Educación	Modelo Malla Curricular Plan de estudios (EGB y BGU)	s.f.	
Ministerio de Educación	Modelo Malla Curricular Plan de estudios (EGB y BGU)	s.f.	
Ministerio de Educación	Transformaciones educativas en Ecuador	2020? 2021?	
Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa INEVAL OECD - PISA - Gob. Nal.	Educación en Ecuador Resultados de PISA para el desarrollo	2018	Organismos internacionales

Unesco LLECE	La UNESCO llama a fortalecer los aprendizajes en Ecuador y destaca sus avances en Matemática y Ciencias en séptimo grado	2019	Organismos internacionales
OREAL/UNESCO	Tercer Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo (TERCE) Cuadernillo 3 – Factores Asociados	2015	Organismos internacionales
OREAL/UNESCO	Tercer Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo (TERCE) Cuadernillo 2 – Logros de Aprendizaje	2015	Organismos internacionales
OREAL/UNESCO	Tercer Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo (TERCE) Resumen ejecutivo Informe de resultados: factores asociados	2015	Organismos internacionales
OREAL/UNESCO	Los aprendizajes fundamentales en América Latina y el Caribe Evaluación de logros de los estudiantes Estudio Regional Comparativo y Explicativo (ERCE 2019)	2021	Organismos internacionales
Observatorio Social del Ecuador, OSE. 2019.	Situación de la niñez y adolescencia en el Ecuador, una mirada a través de los ODS.	2018	Organismos internacionales
The Human Capital Project (Edu Analytics)	Ecuador Learning Poverty Brief	2019	World Bank
World Bank	When Promising Interventions Fail: Personalized Coaching for Teachers in a Middle-Income Country	2022	World Bank
World Bank	Overview: A Core Analysis of Youth Employment in Ecuador	2021	World Bank
World Bank	Ecuador Country Gender Scorecard	2021	World Bank
World Bank	Evaluation of ALMPs targeting the young and vulnerable*	2021	World Bank
Vanessa Rodríguez Journal Compilation © 2013 International Mind, Brain, and Education Society and Blackwell Publishing, Inc.	The Potential of Systems Thinking in Teacher Reform as Theorized for the Teaching Brain Framework	2013	Académicos
Susy Ndaruhutse, Charlotte Jones and Anna Riggall Education Development Trust	Why systems thinking is important for the education sector	2019	Académicos
Yue-Yi Hwa and Lant Pritchett RISE	Teacher careers in education systems that are coherent for learning	2021	Académicos
Marcos Eduardo Cantos Ochoa y Johanna Rosalí Reyes Reinoso	El nuevo modelo de gestión educativa y su impacto en las escuelas de educación básica del cantón Cañar, Ecuador.	2018	Académicos
Karla Meneses, Andrea Yáñez, Jennyfer León y Kamila Aguirre	Escuelas efectivas: el caso de la educación básica de Ecuador	octubre diciembre 2021	Académicos
Ben Ross Schneider, Pablo Cevallos Estarellas, Barbara Bruns	The Politics of Transforming Education in Ecuador: Confrontation and Continuity, 2006–2017	2019	Académicos

Espinoza Freire, Eudaldo Enrique Ley Leyva, Nelly Victoria	Educación intercultural en el Ecuador: Una revisión sistemática	2020	Académicos
Fernando Reimers. In Henri Carey Editor	Cap. 11. Education. In Understanding contemporary Latin America.	2022	Académicos
Fernando M. Reimers (coordinador)	Diálogos por un Nuevo Contrato Social para la Educación. Opciones para Reimaginar Juntos Nuestros Futuros	2022	Académicos
Espinoza Freire, Eudaldo Enrique Ley Leyva, Nelly Victoria.	Educación intercultural en el Ecuador: Una revisión sistemática	2020	Académicos
Pavo, M. Á. H., Weaver, Y. E., Rivera, M., Espinosa, D., & Navarrete, V. O.	Ruta pedagógica hacia el 2030: La propuesta de un modelo para el sistema educativo ecuatoriano.	2021	Académicos
Vélez, M. L. C.	Cambiar la burocracia y el control por la formación y la confianza.	2020	Académicos
Luna, F.O	Docentes ecuatorianos: pilares en los cuales se sostiene la educación en tiempos del COVID-19. Una mirada a la pandemia de Covid-	2020 21?	Académicos
Fernández González, M. & Vinuesa, J. T.	<i>No aman discutir con la gente. Paradojas de la institucionalización de la participación ciudadana en Imbabura, Ecuador (2008-2017).</i>	2020	Sociedad Civil/Fundacione s
Gómez P, L.	<i>El incremento al sueldo de los maestros. ¿Está el Estado en capacidad de asumirlo?.</i>	2021	Sociedad Civil/Fundacione s
Grupo FARO	La sociedad civil en Ecuador. Fact sheet. [PDF].	2020	Sociedad Civil/Fundacione s
Grupo FARO & Confederación Ecuatoriana de las Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil (CEOSC).	<i>Hacia el fortalecimiento de la Sociedad Civil. Construyendo la política pública para la gestión de las organizaciones de la sociedad civil en el Ecuador. [PDF].</i>	2016	Sociedad Civil/Fundacione s
Ulloa, C., Mancheno, D., & Martínez, V.	Una mirada a las organizaciones de la sociedad civil en Ecuador. Diagnóstico de su situación actual.	2022	Sociedad Civil/Fundacione s
Herrera, S. & Zanafria, J.	Fortalecimiento y Sostenibilidad de las OSC en el Ecuador.	2018	Sociedad Civil/Fundacione s
Yépez, A.	Invertir en sueldos para Magisterio es prioritario.	18 - 03 - 2022.	Academia

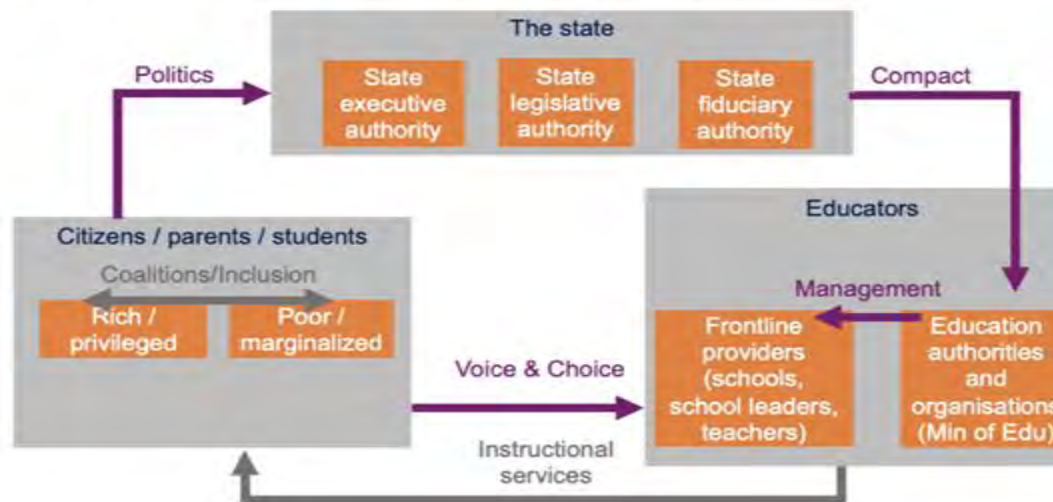
Based on the documents aforementioned, the following analysis by relation seeks to characterise the Ecuadorian Education System:

Relationship: Politics

Principal: Citizens / parents / students

Agent: Maximum representatives of the five functions of the Ecuadorian State: Legislative, Executive, Judicial and Indigenous Justice, Social Control and Transparency, and Electoral

Figure 2. Accountability triangle of an education system



Source: Adapted from Pritchett 2015

Political relations in the education system of Ecuador are characterised by the Constitutional Framework where access to fee-free quality education is a right including the undergraduate level (Ecuadorian Constitution, 2008). In this scenario, the current population enrolled in the basic education system is 4.5 million students (more than 23% of the country's population of 17.6 million inhabitants) (Ministry of Education of Ecuador, 2022). Thus, the level of involvement of citizens as parents or students is extremely high in relation to the education system. For this reason, the demands, and expectations of civil society (as principal in the politics relation) is key to the goals and work of the agents (the state in its five institutional forms as proclaimed in the Ecuadorian constitution). The main representatives of functions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 described below are the **Agents in the Politics and the Principals in Compact relationship**.

Relationship: Compact

Principal: Maximum representatives of the five functions of the Ecuadorian State: President of the Republic- Executive; President of the National Assembly - Legislative;

Attorney General - Judicial; Comptroller General - Social Control and Transparency; President of the National Electoral Council - Electoral.

Education system:

Education in Ecuador is regulated by the Ministry of Education and is divided into public or fiscal, fiscomisional, municipal, and private education; religious; intercultural bilingual (indigenous ancestral languages).

According to the current Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador (2008), the state will guarantee fee-free education at all levels. Also in the same legal body, it is made clear that a part of the income of the fiscal money must be destined for investment in education.

There are two school calendars: Coastal-Galapagos region calendar and the Sierra-Amazonia calendar. The Coastal region starts the school calendar in April-May while the Sierra-Amazonia calendar starts in September.

Compact: Education System

-Ministry of Education - **Agent** of Executive: Ministry of Education. Art.154 of the Constitution.

- Ministry of Education - **Principal** in the relationship of delegation to the authorities (**Agent**) in the different areas and levels of decentralisation and management. The local authorities are **Principals** of the schools in the management relationship. Schools are **Agents** in the voice and choice relationship, and students, teachers, and families (citizens) are **Principals**, who delegate educational services to them.

Agent of Executive and Ministry of Education: Secretary of the Bilingual Intercultural Education System <https://www.gob.ec/seseib>. Develops technical, pedagogical, and administrative training processes for people with cultural identity and an open mind, provides change from community early childhood education to higher education, in the different processes, modalities and educational levels with the participation of peoples and nationalities. There are 14 languages that require socio-cultural contextualization of learning. Among its great challenges is the preservation of ancestral knowledge and languages, to consolidate its identity and as a basis for the development of skills for the 21st century. They have growing organisation and political participation and seek greater educational autonomy. That is, to be the *principal* and not the *agent* in compact relationships.

Agent of Executive - INEVAL: National Institute of Educational Evaluation, a public law entity, with administrative, financial, and technical autonomy, with the purpose of promoting the quality of education. Is the public body in charge of carrying (**Principal**) out the comprehensive evaluation of the National Education System: Ministry, students, teachers, directors, and rectors (**Agents**). Assessments are based on learning standards approved by the Ministry of Education (P).

Higher Education

Agent of Executive: SENESCYT: the National Secretariat for Higher Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation is the body in charge of Higher Education.

Principal in the delegation relationship with the universities (**Agent**). Senescyt (P) and the Ministry of Education (P) function as independent institutions, which implies the challenge of articulating learning at different levels and facilitating the admission of students from all over the country to higher education.

Compact relationship:

Principal - the State: Constitution. Chapter I. Ecuador is a State of rights and social justice, democratic, sovereign, independent, unitary, intercultural, and plurinational. It is organised in the form of a Republic and is governed in a decentralised manner.

The 5 functions of the Ecuadorian State are: Title IV of the Constitution refers to the "Participation and Organisation of Power", that is, we are facing what is known as the Organic Part of the Constitution, the same that is integrated through five Functions: Legislative, Executive, Judicial and Indigenous Justice, Transparency and Social Control, and Electoral.

We will define those that are directly related to the educational system:

1. **Principal.** *The Legislative Function:* Constitution: Capítulo II. National Assembly. Fulfills the functions of creating laws and control, including the possibility of proposing impeachment against the President of the Republic, the Vice President, and the Ministers of State (A). In Ecuador, it is called the National Assembly, with headquarters in Quito, and exercises legislative function; it is unicameral. Currently, the inconsistency between executive (P) and legislative (P) is the salary increase of teachers in the reform of the Education Law (LOEI) without financial analysis. The new floor defined in the Law is equivalent to an increase of 22 %. This value and others established by this law will expand the current fiscal deficit above USD 6,000 million (Gómez, P. 2021). On the other hand, 80% of teachers (approx. 130.000) in the country earn \$817 and there has been no salary increase since 2011. The consequence is the demotivation of teachers because they do not feel valued and the shortage of new teachers in the education system due to low pay (Yépez, A. PUCE, 2022). The teachers' unions (A) claim that article 115 of the Reformatory Organic Law of LOEI (2021) determines that the salary scale of teachers will be established by the competent authority in matters of remuneration in the sector, in coordination with the National Education Authority (P- Compact), whose floor "will not be less than equivalent to two points five unified basic salaries". Talking about 2.5 basic salaries is equivalent, at the moment, to USD 1,000 per month. Due to the high fiscal deficit, in recent years, the Ecuadorian government (P- Politics) has reduced the budget for education, health and labour. According to the budget execution records of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (P-Compact), 2020 was the year in which the fewest

resources were allocated to the institutions that make up these three sectors. In contrast, a larger budget was allocated for social welfare.

The Ministry of Education (A) has a permanent relationship with the Ministry of Finance (A) for managing the budget, and with the Ministry of Labour (A) for relations with teachers and administrative employees of the Ministry. However, the 3 Ministries depend on the National Planning Secretariat (P), to whom each ministry sends its priorities for the annual planning and the ministry of Finance presents the budget to the Assembly.

2. **Principal. Executive (P)**: Constitution. Cap.III. Art 141,147. The Executive Function is exercised by the President of the Republic (P), who represents the State extrajudicially, exercises regulatory power and oversees the entire Central and Institutional Public Administration*, either directly or indirectly through his vice president, ministers or delegates (A), and the other agencies and institutions necessary to fulfil, within the scope of their competence, the attributions of stewardship, planning, execution, and evaluation of national public policies.

*Second Section. Art. 227. Public administration constitutes a service to the community that is governed by the principles of effectiveness, efficiency, quality, hierarchy, deconcentration, decentralisation, coordination, participation, planning, transparency, and evaluation.

-Agents of Executive. President of the Republic: Ministries of Education, Finance and Labour. Constitution. Art.154, and authorities of the ministry in the different areas and levels of decentralisation and management are the **Agents** of the Minister of Education, Finance and Labour- **Principal**.

3. **Principal. Judicial and Indigenous Justice (P)**: Constitution. Cap. IV.Art.167,168. Judicial Function.

Tenth Section. Art.194-197. The State Attorney General's Office (**P**) is an autonomous institution, which directs pre-trial and criminal procedural investigation, seeking access to justice subject to the principles of opportunity and minimal criminal intervention, with special attention to the public interest and the rights of victims. Example: In defence of teachers prosecute (**P**) authorities of the ministry (**A**) and the minister personally (**A**) if the established processes such as recategorization, labour compensation, etc. are not complied with. Teachers' unions (**A**) have gone to the prosecutor's office to denounce the national authority of education (**A-politics/P-Compact**) based on art. 282 of the COIP (Comprehensive Criminal Organic Code) that says: *Failure to comply with legitimate decisions of the competent authority...*and can be punished with up to 3 years of deprivation of liberty.

4. **Principal.** Transparency and social control (P). Constitution. Cap V. Art. 204-206.: Trust and fiduciary authorities are included, such as the Superintendency of Banks and Companies (Section Fourth. Art.213), but they will not be described because they are not related to the Educational System in Ecuador.

4.1. **Principal.** Third Section. Art. 211-212. The Comptroller General of the State (P): It is a technical body, in charge of controlling the use of state resources, and of legal entities of private law that have public resources. In the case of the Ministry of Education, formal follow-up is carried out on all the processes that involve resources, with the respective sanctions and glosses on each of the authorities that have a signature of responsibility, and the final responsibility always lies with the minister. Example: acquisition of physical and technological infrastructure, school meals, uniforms, texts, projects. In some cases, the President delegates the minister an acquisition that the Comptroller may question, thus ministry authorities do not want to implement the president's delegation as it may put Ministry of Education's authorities in legal issues. Ex: purchase of laptops. Incoherence between **P** (President)-**P** (Comptroller) and **A** (Minister)

4.2. **Principal.** Constitution. Fifth Section. Art. 214, 215, 216. The Ombudsman's Office (P): Promote or sponsor the resources of Habeas Corpus and Amparo of the people who require it. Defend and excite the observance of the fundamental rights that this Constitution guarantees. Observe the quality of public services: For example, he declared himself against returning to classes during the pandemic for the safety of students and teachers (Incoherence between **P** (President)-**P** (Ombudsman) - **A** (Minister)

4.3. **Principal.** Fourth section. Art. 237. State Attorney General's Office (P). 3. The legal advice and the acquittal of the legal consultations to the organisms and entities of the public sector with binding character, on the intelligence or application of the law, in those matters in which the Constitution or the law do not confer powers to other authorities or bodies.

5. **Principal.** Electoral (P). Constitution. Cap VI. Art.217.National Electoral Council: Its functions are to organise and control the elections, it can sanction parties and candidates that violate electoral regulations; and it must register and supervise the political parties and movements

Fiduciary System:

For the purposes of this investigation, we will explain how the management of the currency and the national budget works, and specifically of the Ministry of Education

(Agent). Because the fiduciary issue is handled by the Central Bank and Superintendent of Banks (**Principal**), which has no direct relationship with the Ministry of Education in Ecuador (**Agent**).

6. **Principal**. State fiduciary authority: Delegation:
Superintendent of Banks (**Principal**)
Central Bank (**Principal**)
Council and National Planning Secretary (**Principal**)
National Assembly (**Principal**)
Ministry of Finance (**Agent**) (P) > local authorities (A)

State Budget: The General State Budget is the estimation of the financial resources that Ecuador has; that is to say, here are the Revenues (oil sales, tax collection, etc.) but there are also the Expenses (of service, production and state operation for education, health, housing, agriculture, security, transportation, electricity, etc. according to the needs identified in the sectors and to the planning of development programs).

Annually, the National Assembly (**Principal**) approves the General State Budget.

The Central Government Budget (PGC) is part of the General State Budget (PGE. Constitution.Art.292-299) directly administered by the Government and its institutions, through the Ministry of Finance (**Agent**).

Ministry of Education (**Agent**) Budget allocation: The Ministry of Education plans prioritising their needs to provide their goods and services to the population and submits it to the General Planning Secretariat (**Principal**) to be included in the annual National Development Plan*, that is the instrument that formulates and monitors public policies, programs and projects; the programming and execution of the State budget; and the investment and allocation of public resources; and coordinates the exclusive powers between the Central State (**Principal**) and the Decentralised Autonomous Governments (**Agent**). Its observance will be mandatory for the public sector and indicative for the other sectors. The institution in charge of formulating the National Development Plan is the General Secretariat of Planning-Ecuador (**Principal**).

*Art. 280.- The National Development Plan is the instrument to which public policies, programs and projects will be subject; the programming and execution of the State budget; and the investment and allocation of public resources; and to coordinate the exclusive competences between the central State and the decentralised autonomous governments. Its observance will be mandatory for the public sector and indicative for the other sectors.

Constitution. Art. 303.-Central Bank (**Principal**). The formulation of monetary, credit, exchange and Finance is the exclusive power of the Executive Branch and will be implemented through the Central Bank. The law will regulate the circulation of currency with liberating power in the Ecuadorian territory. The execution of the credit and financial policy will also be exercised through public banking.

The amount is allocated to cover the expenditures foreseen in programs, subprograms, projects, and budgetary units, necessary for the achievement of the programmed objectives and goals of the Ministry of Education (**Agent**).

When the Ministry (**Agent**) needs to implement an investment project, that they are not permanent expenses and the funds can come from multilateral organisations (**Principal**), it requests the approval of a 'Dictamen de prioridad' or "Priority Dictum", for its inclusion in the Annual Investment Budget and for its budget allocation.

Relationship: Management

Principal: Education Authorities and Organisations

Agent: Frontline providers (schools, school leaders, teachers).

The Ecuadorian state, through the National Education Authority (Ministry of Education) is in charge of controlling and guaranteeing that the right to fee-free, quality and secular education is met (Article 5, LOEI). Amongst the most relevant competencies of MINEDUC is the design and monitoring of the implementation of the national curriculum, including the Intercultural Education System.

The relationship of management is characterised by a model of centralised policy design, and decentralised implementation of the national curriculum and budget, based on the constitutional reform of 2008 (Constitution, 2008; Estatuto Orgánico MINEDUC, 2010). The Ministry of Education of Ecuador is the largest ministry of the Cabinet (in numbers of employees) and holds control of the 9 zones (geographical planning distribution) and 140 districts. Management between authorities and frontline providers contains three levels: Central Office (Principal in the Management relation at the central level - **P1**), Zone office and district. The Ministry of Education holds two vice ministries;

Vice ministry of Education: one focused on Education (in pedagogical terms) with three undersecretaries:

- Undersecretary for Education Foundations
- Undersecretary for Good Living

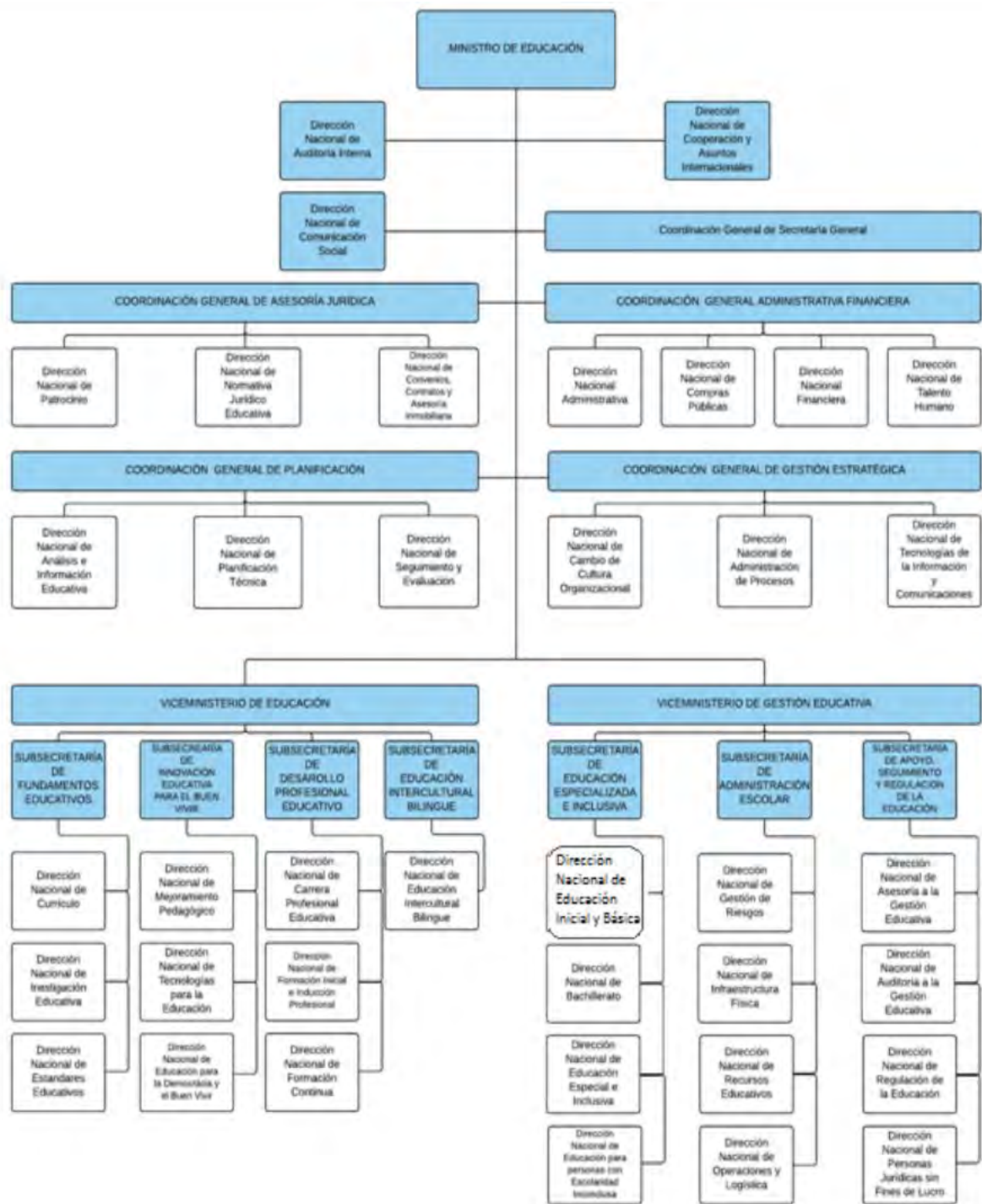
- Undersecretary for Teachers Professional Development and Training

Vice ministry of Education Management:

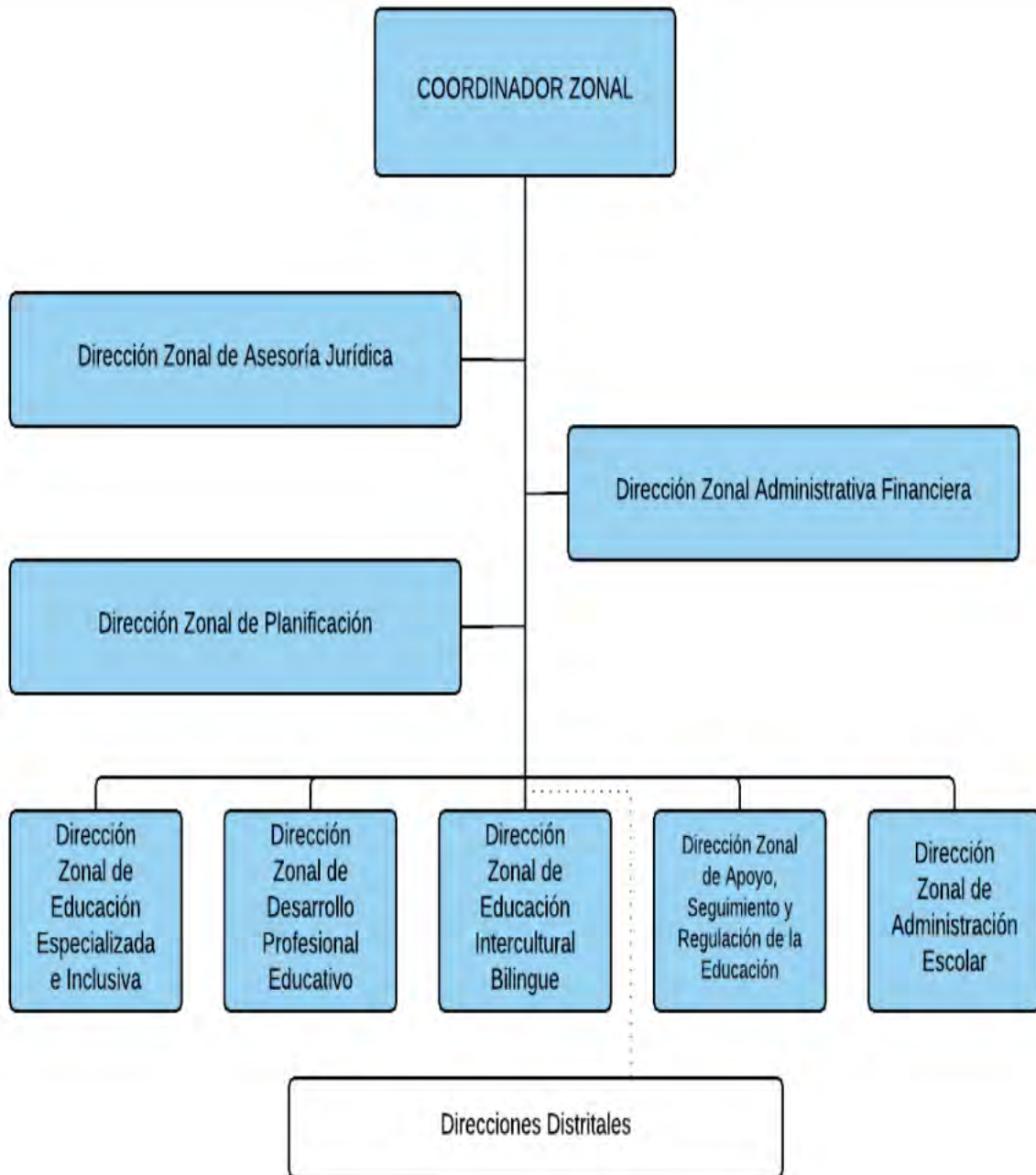
- Undersecretary for Support, Monitoring and Regulation
- Undersecretary of School's Administration
- Undersecretary for Special and Inclusive Education

Under each of the Undersecretaries there are 3-4 departments with an average of 10 analysts that design public policy at the central level in the Quito offices. In addition to this, the 9 zone offices (Principal in the Management relation at the zone level - **P2**) are distributed along the country, and their role is to implement the policies designed at the central level. Moreover, the 9 zone offices lead the 140 District Offices (Principal in the Management relation at the district level - **P3**) that are directly related to schools through school leaders and teachers as frontline providers and agents in the management relationship - **A**.

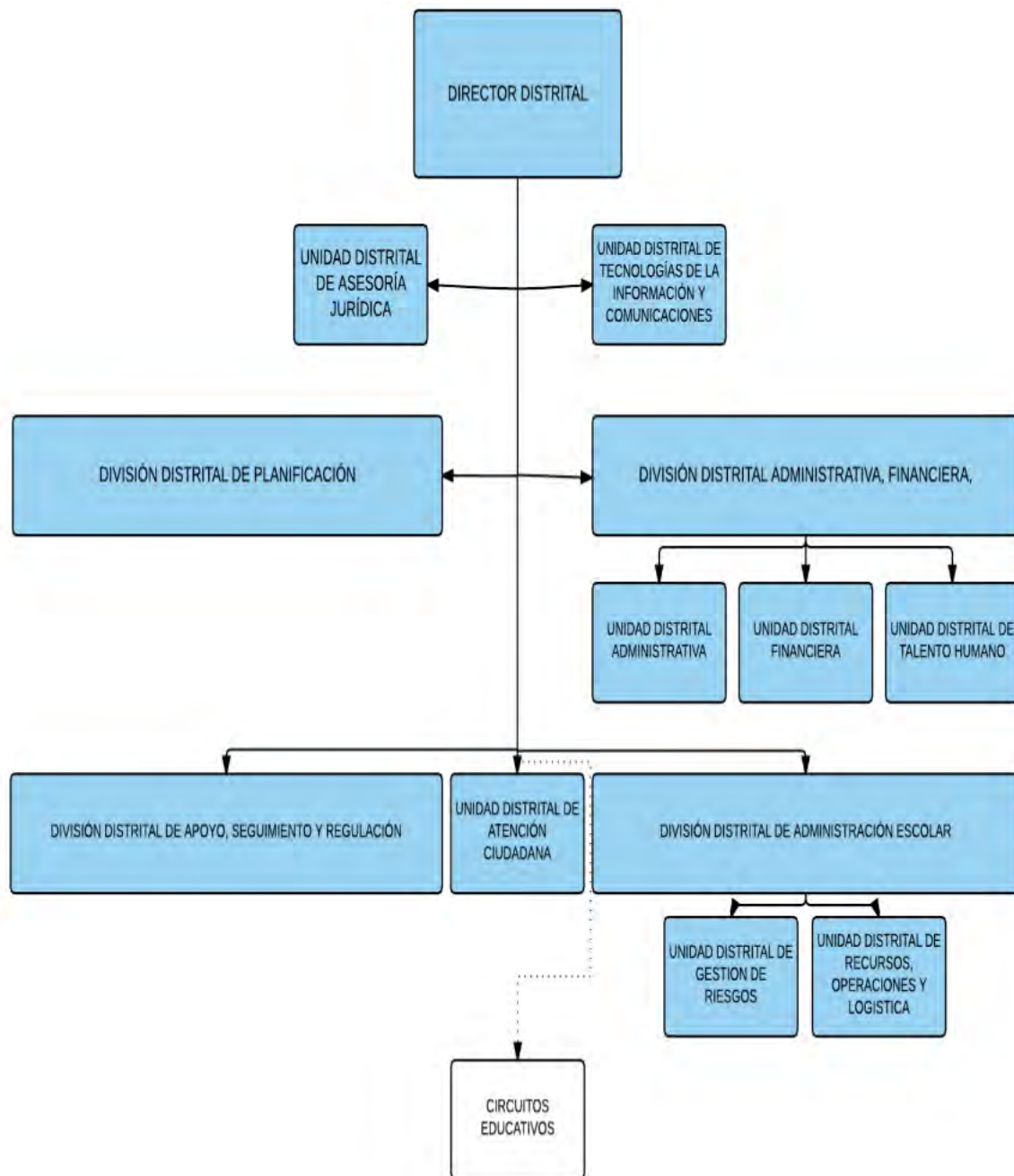
The Ministry's structure is detailed below:



Organisation Chart of a Zone Office:



Organisation Chart of a District Office:



The relationship of management at central office as principal 1, at zone office as principal 2 and at the district level as principal 3; is highly bureaucratic and holds several intermediaries between the “desk policy makers” in central office and the frontline providers (Velez, 2020). Under such a management scheme, information flows from central office down to teachers at many steps, taking time and with no clear application logic, whereas the flow of information from frontline providers to the central office is also limited and often with low quality for decision making. Thus, it is a key

issue within information: on one hand does not allow to design policies that mirror education “on the ground”, and on the other hand information that is treated by several steps falls unclear to frontline providers, who often are required to comply in excess with forms and administrative work.

Additionally, in the management relation there are sub elements such as teachers’ professional development policies and curricular implementation that are similarly implemented after many intermediaries (Pavo, et al, 2021). In terms of finance, more than 80% of the current budget of MINEDUC is destined to paying teacher wages. The management of teachers is decentralised at the district level where compliance is expected at the “human talent” office where the professionals are focused on purely administrative compliance rather than pedagogical or curricular topics. (Estatuto Orgánico MINEDUC, 2010). In the case of teachers’ training is designed and implemented by the central office (P1) with a standardised vision of teacher needs based on teacher standardised test-results implemented by INEVAL.

In the case of agents of the management relationship that are the frontline providers - school leaders and teachers - as mentioned previously, the information, delegation, finance, and motivation schemes are indirect and thought of at a central level with a local implementation that is intended to treat teachers as work force irrelevant of their pedagogical role. The multilevel principals (P1 - Central Office, P2 - Zone office, P3 - District office) creates incoherencies within principals that are brought down to agents who are often deciding how and what to comply in terms of training, teaching, learning and other administrative situations.

Similarly, school leaders live in a complex situation as the system has more than 6 thousand leaders that are not earning as such but are actual teachers in charge of leading schools. Only 429 school leaders receive a wage that is equivalent to their duties (Distributivo de Personal, 2022). This situation is an incoherence between the system goals and finance where motivation is affected in terms of achieving more effective learning.

Looking at the elements of the relation it is possible to understand that in more detail how the relation is set out:

Delegation: MINEDUC’s Central Office delivers instructions as regulation through Ministerial Agreements signed by the Minister or Resolutions signed by other Central Office high level officials (Coordinators or Undersecretaries). Additionally, memos are sent to reinforce or punctually deliver instructions to Zone offices and sometimes district offices directly. This is not always clear cut and despite the Ministry’s hierarchy, some instructions are not trickling down from the central office to zones and then to districts but directly from the central office to districts. This may result in misinformation and coordination difficulties where frontline providers (school leaders and teachers) are directly affected (Velez, 2020).

Finance: the budget is allocated centrally by the Ministry of Finance, yet the financial administration of MINEDUC works in terms of Zones as administrative units that are provided with a budget that was approved centrally and needs to be administered by the Zone leader. Each zone has financial and planning units that work as counterparts for the central office where monitoring is implemented in terms of budgetary allocation and execution.

Information: formally, MINEDUC has a National Department for Information that is a dependency of the Planning Coordination, where information is centralised and unified with all required protocols. This information is often processed and is not always a source for decision making in the short term. A key element of information provision is the one required for the purchase of textbooks or school breakfasts where the number of students is reported by this unit, yet with continuous changes and inconsistencies due to the dynamic nature of enrolment. At this point, it is the Zone office, the one in charge of managing these goods and making sure that the information reported is accurate. Thus, the information feedback loop is often a matter of unification and time consuming with matrices and excel sheets as opposed to unified datasets that are updated regularly. The quality of information largely depends on frontline providers who report on all types of data of the school and students and who often find themselves claiming for simplified data collection methods and less administrative processes. (Luna, 2020; Velez 2020).

On the other hand, INEVAL (National Institute of Educational Evaluation) offers information on learning outcomes through the SERBACHILLER Student tests at the national level that evaluate, with standards defined by the Ministry of Education, Mathematics, Language and Literature, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences. A sample of grades 4, 7, 10 of basic education and 3rd of high school is evaluated. In addition, a survey of associated factors is carried out at the national level to understand the socioeconomic background of students. In the same way, Ineval carries out the SERMAESTRO teacher evaluations for formal admission to the teaching profession and not only with a service contract.

It is important to ensure that this information is used as formative feedback for teachers and students in a contextualised manner. Likewise, it is necessary to adapt this evaluation to people with special needs and to different ethnic groups.

Support: this element is understood as the provision of tools for frontline providers in order to improve their work. In this aspect, it is key to appeal to the lack of support to school leaders who as mentioned before, are not only underpaid, but are also provided scarce training opportunities despite several attempts made by central office through the Undersecretary of Professional Development and Training to create training programmes there is not a clear set of courses that school leaders can undertake to

support their roles. The case of teachers is less complex as there is a plan for Teacher Training and a sustained investment on teacher training through a recently closed investment project named "SiProfe" (created in 2016-2022) with more than 40 million USD on investment. Additionally, Universities play a key role in supporting teachers to face their endeavours with more tools, yet these opportunities are private and charge fees that are in charge of teachers.

Motivation: this element is perhaps the most complex in terms of the management relation as it has to do with non-financial motivation policies that MINEDUC seeks to implement in frontline providers. The case of school leaders is critical as they are underpaid and motivation is very low, leading them to step down from the leading responsibilities. Similarly, teachers claim a wage increase based on recent legal reforms and their motivation is often linked to this. At least in discursive attempts. When looking into the information. One of the policy priorities for the current administration has been creating non-financial benefits for teachers and it is in this exercise that on April 13 of 2022 (on Ecuador's Teachers Day) the Minister presented the Teachers ID that is tied to benefits with discounts on shops (with alliances with the private sector). This is a first attempt to mitigate the lack of motivation of a career that has not suffered a wage increase for the past decade.

Relationship: Voice and Choice

Principal: Citizens, parents, students, families, mass media.

Agent: Frontline providers (schools, school leaders, teachers).

In Ecuador, the relationships between principals and agents show different levels, based on social and economic status, territorial and cultural differences.

Legal framework for citizen representation

As said above, the 2008 Constitution that is still in force defines Ecuador as a "constitutional State of rights and justice" and establishes five State Functions (Asamblea Constituyente del Ecuador, 2008).

The political-administrative structure of the Ecuadorian State places the people as the principal and first supervisor of public power, and highlights participation as an expression of popular sovereignty, at the same level as the political representation. In fact, to the three powers recognized in the 1998 constitution, two were added in the Constitution of 2008: the Electoral, and the Transparency and Social Control.

Indeed, "Ecuador has been the first country to rise to the same rank as the classic three branches of government (the legislative, the executive and the judicial) the 'participatory function' and the electoral, as two new powers" (Fernández González, & Torres Vinueza, 2020, p.53).

In addition to this innovation, a difference is established between the concept of power and the concept of function: the power is unique and lies in the people, while the function is the exercise of an authority derived from power. The function is exercised by a holder (Agent), as a delegate of the people (Principal).

The "Transparency and Social Control" function is the one that informs and supports the Voice and Choice relationship.

According to Article 204 of the current Constitution of the Republic, the Transparency and Social Control function seeks to promote and encourage "the control of the entities and organisms of the public, and natural or legal persons of the private sector that provide services or develop activities of public interest, so that they carry them out responsibly, transparency and fairness". In addition, "it will promote and encourage citizen participation; will protect the exercise and fulfilment of rights; and will prevent and combat corruption" (Asamblea Constituyente del Ecuador, 2008, p.105).

The Transparency and Social Control function is made up of the Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control; the Ombudsman; the General State Comptroller; and the Superintendencies. Its functions include promoting accountability mechanisms in state entities, fighting corruption, and supporting citizen oversight processes and social control of public management, appointing the State Prosecutor, the members of the National Electoral Council, the Contentious Electoral Court and those of the Council of the Judiciary (Asamblea Constituyente del Ecuador, 2008, p.105).

Although the legal framework consolidates the governing role of the State over the national education system, it also promotes citizen participation in educational management, in accordance with Article 85 of the Constitution, which provides that "in the formulation, execution, evaluation and control of public policies and public services, the participation of individuals, communities, peoples and nationalities will be guaranteed" (Asamblea Constituyente del Ecuador, 2008, p.42); and with Article 100 of the Constitution, which establishes the participation of society "at all levels of government", to "prepare national, local and sectoral plans and policies between governments and citizens", to "improve the quality of public investment and define development agendas", to "strengthen democracy with permanent mechanisms of transparency, accountability and social control", and to "promote citizen training and promote communication processes" (Asamblea Constituyente del Ecuador, 2008, p. 47-48).

Also, Article 2, literal "o", of the LOEI (Organic Law of Intercultural Education) conceives citizen participation (Principal) "as the protagonist of the educational community in the organisation, government, operation, decision-making, planning, management and accountability in matters inherent to the educational field, as well as its instances and establishments" (Registro Oficial, 2011, p. 9).

In addition, in its second general provision, the LOEI establishes that "all the instances of the National Education System will guarantee the citizen participation of individuals, communities and their various organisational forms in all actions, planning and decision-making of educational management, through manuals of specific procedures that must, in addition, be compulsorily disseminated" (Registro Oficial, 2011, p. 40).

Also relevant is Article 12, literals d), e) and g), of the LOEI, that establishes that mothers, fathers and/or legal representatives of students have the right to elect and be elected as part of the committees of fathers and mothers, family, and others participation bodies of the educational community; and to participate in the school government to which they belong, and in the processes of accountability for the management and educational processes of the authorities, teachers and personnel who work in educational institutions (Registro Oficial, 2011, p.16).

Therefore, it is possible to point out that, in theory, the National Constitution opens spaces, paths, and mechanisms for citizen participation, which, in short, are protected by law.

Civil society in Ecuador

According to Grupo Faro & CEOSC (2016), civil society in Ecuador "constitutes an autonomous space between the State and the market, where citizens can exercise and defend their rights, as well as promote various democratic values" (p.9). On the other hand, organised civil society "corresponds to the so-called "third sector": various organisations, either de facto or de jure, who work for the common good and are non-profit" (Ulloa, Mancheno, & Martínez, 2022, p.7).

There are currently five different regulatory bodies, which contain rules aimed at social organisations: the Constitution, the Civil Code, the Organic Law of Citizen Participation, Executive Decree No. 739, and certain ministerial agreements that regulate matters related to the process of legal formation (Ulloa et al, 2022, p.7).

Among the main areas of action of CSOs, there are: generation and transfer of knowledge; policy advocacy (lobbying); organisational strengthening; public denunciation, communication, and dissemination; financing for development; and attention to vulnerable groups (Herrera & Zanafria, 2018, p.48).

For Grupo FARO, the organised civil society in Ecuador is wide and diverse. It is made up of any actor other than the State, which is not for profit” (2020, p.2). As the image below illustrates, civil society in Ecuador is conformed by:

- Collectives and social movements
- Professional associations
- Unions
- Academia
- Civil society organisations
- Religious organisations
- Citizenship in general



Source: Grupo FARO, 2020, p.2.

Regarding the participation of citizens in education policies, Principals could be characterised by civil groups of people that work for education, autonomously and without interference from the State, for and on behalf of the people. It is a very large and diverse universe, which includes representatives from:

- Parents organisations and school committees
- Families and communities
- Bilingual Intercultural Education leaders

- Special and specialised education professionals
- Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities
- Mass media in general
- Community radio stations
- Rights protection organisations
- School providers of breakfasts, texts, uniforms, etc.

Although these groups stem from the groups above, their action and interests are obviously focused on the educational sphere.

Within society, therefore, the wide range of people who can exercise control over schooling processes varies enormously and comes from different voices. It operates on different levels and its action and impact differ on a large scale.

Relationships within the frame

The relationship between families (principals) and schools, directors, and teachers (agents) in terms of delegation, finance, information, support, and motivation can be characterised as follows:

Delegation:

Although the State has the mandate to provide education to its citizens, and that the Constitution opens tools and ways for citizens to have a voice and choice in decisions about how their children's education should be or how to measure responsibilities, in practice, families and/or representatives do not have much scope for action or decision. A very significant example of this occurs in public education, where schools are assigned, and families are forced to send their children to those schools. The margin of choice is minimal.

Consequently, families become weak actors within the system, being not aware that they can have a voice and a choice in their children's education. This is aggravated because the entire chain of command in management can interfere by taking measures not aligned with learning.

An example that reflects the low or null action of the communities in the choice of a school can be seen particularly with the Millennium Schools, built since 2008. These new schools, which had a huge investment, were imposed on the communities. Moreover, they eliminated schools that were close and familiar to peasant and indigenous communities. Some students were forced to travel enormous distances (Plan V, 2017).

Their voice is very weak (and even non-existent) in terms of decisions that concern educational quality or might be decisive in a system aligned with learning. This is reflected more clearly in parent committees, whose voice is focused more on making decisions on formal problems (infrastructure, materials, books, etc.), rather substantive ones (education quality).

Finance:

Families and/or representatives (and adult students) finance the educational system through two channels: taxes that go to public schools, and direct financing in the case of private education.

However, there is an evident inequity in the distribution of resources for schools. This is further aggravated in rural, vulnerable, and remote areas, which receive few resources to function properly (infrastructure, connectivity, technology, etc).

In Ecuador, in May 2020, Unicef reported that only 37 % of households have internet access, (which means that 6 out of 10 children cannot continue their studies through digital platforms). And that in rural areas, only 16 % of households have this service (Unicef, 2020), affecting also ethnic minorities.

Parents usually complain about the fact that schools make them pay for whatever they need (resources, materials, infrastructure), because the government can't afford schools. Families feel obligated to finance schools, they just can't say "no".

Information:

Families and/or representatives could assess the role of frontline providers through standardised exams. However, this information is not located in context or focused specifically on each student. Standardised tests (Ser Estudiante) are designed to rank and sort students, not to measure learning. These do not give families tools to assess the educational level of their children. They do not explain in what context or how to improve. Although reading comprehension is an indicator on which the education system must work hard, it is not exactly known in a targeted manner what should be improved in each context. (Ineval, 2021). Therefore, if there is no feedback to schools, community participation is weakened.

Motivation:

Depending on many factors, there is extrinsic motivation of families towards schools (interest, affection) because for them it is important that their children go to school. But they may not have much leeway to exercise intrinsic motivation. This is notorious, for example, in the case of teachers who are assigned by the government to very remote places, without monetary support, or must go to places where they do not belong culturally. An example of families involved in education is the CREA schools project, whose model makes parents participate and feel involved in their children's education.

Preliminary diagnostic analysis, identification of gaps and key stakeholders

The following section seeks to present a preliminary diagnosis and analysis based on the information from the desk review with the schemes of the RISE framework in terms of alignments looking at the different sub elements that were proposed by RISE. The purpose of this section is to identify gaps making sense of the key stakeholders that have been invited to take part on the pilot project.

Table of elements- sub elements- relationships incoherencies

Sub Element:	Fiduciary -Budget	Human resources and	curriculum/learning process	Information/ participation
Relationship/ function	Politics	Compact	Management	Voice and Choice
Delegation	Incoherence between 5 principals of the State functions affect responsibility relationships and functions and makes the educational system align for access, compliance, and patronage.	The Ministry receives the direct delegation from the Executive to improve the quality of education and guarantee education for all, but the Assembly and Social Control Organisations delegate benefits that are sometimes unsustainable for patronage purposes.	New curricular management but gap between the technical document and the teaching practice in the classroom and overload of administrative tasks.	They do not participate directly in the decisions for curricular reforms, the choice of texts or the selection of teachers.
Finance	The Constitution establishes annual increases of at least zero-point five percent of the Gross Domestic Product until reaching a minimum of six percent of the Gross Domestic Product. It has not been possible due to the economic crisis.	The budget is not aligned to offer the teaching incentives, educational resources, and infrastructure necessary to improve learning		

<p>Information</p>	<p>Financial resources are focused on maintaining the system and require more information to assess the quality of spending and results.</p>	<p>The Ministry does not have a solid and updated EMIS focused on results to make decisions with transparency. Labour laws are not flexible and prevent innovations</p>	<p>There is not enough information to assess the results of teachers and recognize them.</p>	<p>Assessment information is not used in a targeted manner to provide feedback to schools. There is not enough information to monitor policies and actions and adapt them to better support teachers, students, and community.</p>
<p>Support</p>	<p>The LOEI Law establishes that teachers' salaries must increase the minimum wage by 2.5, but the Executive does not have the resources.</p>		<p>The support is standardised, and teachers need more <i>in-situ</i> and contextualised accompaniment</p>	
<p>Motivation</p>				<p>Not being able to make decisions directly in the education of children means that families do not get involved in school management</p>

Table of alignments for each relationship

On a preliminary scenario and based on the desk review (policy documents and grey literature), the Compact relationship is mostly aligned to access as the national government discourse has been increasing opportunities for young people and tackling post pandemic dropout rates. This is translated into delegation, finance and information as the focus is on improving and monitoring enrolment. In a lesser sense, finance is related to access as it tends to also fall into other purposes such as patronage in terms of relations with teachers as well as non-teacher expenditure. Thus, when looking at the overall situation of the compact relation between state agencies and the Ministry of Education, one can note the alignment to access and patronage where the coherence for learning is present mainly on the goals set in general terms. The report on Education Future (2021), based on the opinion of several experts, sets school enrolment as a key priority.

Analysis of alignment in the Compact relationship

Relationship	Element	Sub-element	Coherent for learning	Aligned for selection	Aligned for access	Aligned for process compliance	Aligned for another purpose: Patronage or interest groups
Compact	Delegation	High level target: what does the executive set as the goal for the system?	X		X		
		Human resources: how does the executive set out human resource goals.			X		X
		De jure / de facto delegation gap: how much of a gap is there between articulated and actual goals?			X		X
	Finance	General: how is finance for education structured?			X		X
		Teachers how is financing for teachers structured?			X		
		Non-teachers: how is finance for other education inputs structured?					X
		Discretion: where and to what extent is discretion for finance in education distributed throughout the system?			X		X
	Information	General: how is information for education structured?			X		
		Quality: How does the system determine that education is of sufficient "quality"?			X	X	
		EMIS: What information is included in the system EMIS?			X		

On the other hand, based on the analysis from the desk review, the management relation is aligned to access but also to compliance and patronage:

Analysis of alignment in the Management relationship

Relationship	Element	Sub-element	Coherent for learning	Aligned for selection	Aligned for Access	Aligned for purposes compliance	Aligned for another purpose: Patronage or Interest groups
Management	Delegation	High level targets	X		X		
		Alignment of curriculum, exams, and learning level of students				X	
		Most important responsibilities			X	X	X
		Spider vs. starfish: local discretion granted to schools/teachers					X
	Finance	How teachers are financed					X
		How inputs are financed			X		
		Spider vs. starfish (allocating funds)			X		
		Accounts vs. accounting			X		
	Information	EMIS					
		Exams purpose			X	X	
		Exam design (curriculum-exam alignment)				X	
		Accounts vs. accounting for school leadership and teachers				X	
	Motivation	Information use				X	
		Teacher professional status / intrinsic motivation			X	X	
	Support	Career advancement and job security / Extrinsic motivators				X	
		Internal coherence/quality of instructional materials				X	
		External coherence between training and other design elements				X	
		Spider vs. starfish: form of instructional materials and teacher training			X		
			Accounts vs. accounting: delivery of teacher training				X

Analysis of alignment in the Voice and Choice relationship

Regarding Voice and Choice, the alignments are centred mainly on Access and Other Purposes, which reveals that families and communities have a very low margin of action, depending heavily on management (the bureaucratic chain), which is aligned with Access (government's main goal). This results in very frequent cases in Patronage and Other Purposes.

Relationship	Element	Sub-element	Coherent / learning	Aligned for selection	Aligned for success	N.A.	N.A.	Aligned for another purpose: Patronage or interest groups
Voice and Choice	Delegation	Alignment of voice and choice: What do parents want?			X			X
		Strength of voice: Does the bureaucracy allow voice a role in governing schools? "Degree of distributed decentralization"			X			
		Strength of voice: Whose voice? To what degree is there internal community cohesion?			X			X
	Information	Alignment of voice and choice: Do standardized exams provide regular, reliable, relevant information on learning?			X			X
		Alignment of voice and choice: Beyond standardized exams, do families get other accounts of whether their child is learning?			X			X
	Finance	Strength of voice: Does the local level have some discretion over financing for education?			X			X
		Alignment of voice and choice: What information is used to inform financing decisions?						X
	Motivation	Strength of voice: Does the local level have some discretion over teacher career structures?			X			
		Alignment of voice and choice: What information is used to inform judgments about school leadership / school choice?			X			X

Initial incoherencies

- ***Within compact: incoherence between delegation, finances, and support:***

The Ministry of Education receives the direct delegation from the executive (the President of Ecuador) to improve the quality of education and guarantee education for all, but the National Assembly and Social Control Organisations delegate benefits for patronage purposes that are sometimes unsustainable (incoherence compact/compact). For example, the approval of the salary increasing law (LOEI), which means that the Ministry of Finance cannot immediately comply with this provision because it was not in the annual budget (incoherence compact/ finances), and in turn cannot assign to the Ministry of Education what was in its budget planning in terms of infrastructure, educational resources, training, etc, until solving the political problem generated with the teachers.

Financial resources are focused on maintaining the system and require more information to assess the quality of spending and results. The budget is not enough to offer the teaching incentives, educational resources, and infrastructure necessary to improve learning. There is inequity in the allocation of resources for the access and use of science and technology (incoherence finance /support).

Suggested principles for intervention:

Review how the issue of financial investment in education could be promoted and focused to close the gap of educational inequity and improve learning for all.

Dialogues at technical tables with education unions, representatives of the finance and labour ministries, in order to agree on a plan for progressive compliance with the law, after developing mechanisms to speed up processes that benefit teachers, such as: promotions, appointments, sectorization, etc

- ***Within compact: incoherence between information and motivation:***

The Ministry does not have a solid and updated EMIS focused on learning (ex. information on results of evaluation of teaching performance and learning focused by school, in order to establish the relationship between them) to make decisions that influence the improvement of learning in the most vulnerable sectors and motivate with awards or bonuses for the best teachers to serve these sectors (incoherence between information and motivation). In addition, there is not enough information on innovations and good teaching practices in the different contexts of the country.

Suggested principles for intervention:

Strengthen the role of directors and school leadership in order to empower schools and the community with more autonomy, to respond to their needs, especially those of the most vulnerable population.

- ***Between compact, management and voice and choice: incoherence between delegation and information:***

The Minister of Education (compact) delegates curricular reforms adapted to new educational trends, but in the management delegation there are gaps between the technical curricular document and the teaching practice in the classroom and, in addition, overload of administrative tasks. Little appreciation of teaching and community experiences that could be inspiring at various levels for public policy. While voice and choice do not participate directly in the decisions for curricular reforms, the choice of texts or the selection of teachers, because they do not have enough information and mechanisms for their participation to influence decision-making.

Suggested principles for intervention:

Greater management and leadership autonomy on the part of managers in schools, so as not to overburden teachers with administrative work and rather implement training and coaching programs. Likewise, focused feedback to teachers and families so that they can make decisions and have greater participation.

- ***Within management: incoherence between delegation, information, and support:***

There is not enough and proper use of information of EMIS to monitor policies and actions delegated by management and adapt them to better support teachers, students and community. There is a lack of articulation of the information generated between instances to establish joint actions.

The support is standardised, and teachers need more in-situ and contextualised accompaniment. Ecuador has an education that has become hyper-standardized over the years, but at the same time seeks a contextualized education that includes cultural diversity.

Suggested principles for intervention:

At the different levels of management, including the school director and teachers, they need more training in the proper use of information, from its production to feedback, and evaluation of educational policy focused on learning.

- ***Between management and voice and choice:***

Not being able to make decisions directly in the education of children means that families do not get involved in school management.

The community perceives that there are isolated actions that generate little impact. In addition, there are too many subjects in the curriculum, and this prevents enriching the diversity of contexts and leaves little room for student creativity and work on soft skills.

Also, there are incoherencies between the different actors, about the meaning of the school. Between management and voice and choice, the incoherencies are associated with the gap between the regulations, guidelines, principles, and the real daily activities and needs of the school, which implies an insufficient understanding of the school and a traditional view on the roles of institutional and pedagogical management of the processes in the school. It is necessary to involve interculturality in the educational system (indigenous nationalities). These particularities must be respected and contextualized. The main problem is in the rural sector, and it must be addressed if we want to seek development.

Suggested principles for intervention:

Strengthen clear and contextualized processes and guidelines.

Consult in the community the relevance of the actions and policies that are going to be taken. Involve families in decision-making and pedagogical activities at their school and not just to report on disciplinary issues or collaboration for physical school improvements.

Initial hypothesis

The main incoherence in the relationships is that although there is a manifest alignment for *learning* by the State and the Executive, this occurs as an alignment for *access (compact, management and voice and choice), compliance (management) and patronage and other objectives (compact and voice and choice)*.

The dominant alignment within the Ecuadorian educational system has been *access*. However, once this objective had been sufficiently achieved (although now due to the pandemic we have regressed), the alignment for *compliance* was consolidated, with an *isomorphic mimicry* approach, where the predominance of logistical tasks and bureaucratized operations prevail to ensure the objectives. On the other hand, alignment for *patronage or other objectives* predominate in professional development and in the allocation of teachers.

This combination of alignments is conditioned, on the one hand, by political instability, which in turn determines short-term public actions and policies, without prior evaluations for reform, among other things, because the Ministry of Education does not have (due to discontinuity) an Educational Management of Information System (EMIS), nourished by updated, validated and dynamic information, in which each actor knows the strategic objectives, the educational management process, their role and responsibility, to be accountable for the transparency and efficiency of management (responsibility). Therefore, a marked incoherence is generated in the relationships with **delegation and information** elements, that affect the *compact and management* relationships, but above all the *politics and voice and choice*, affecting the **support and motivation** elements.

On the other hand, there is a lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities between the five functions of the State, especially between the Legislative, Judicial, and Indigenous Judicial, and Social Control and Transparency, which directly affects and generates incoherencies in the *Politics, Compact, Voice and Choice* relationships, and with an emphasis on *management*.

Meanwhile, the incoherence affects the elements, especially **delegation, finances, and information**. Consequently, the governance of the country is weakened, and therefore, the educational system. These incoherencies are reflected in the following **sub-elements**: a) the **budget** is managed without sufficient analysis of the quality of spending and monitoring of the effectiveness of public policies; b) the information (**EMIS**) is not updated and validated consistently between principals and agents; c)

the **curriculum** and its possible reforms and flexibility, given that it is not clear in the *management* relationship within the elements of **delegation, support and motivation** that are affected by the incoherencies in the alignment; d) **teachers** do not have sufficient **support** to be able to implement the curriculum in an adequate and contextualised manner, and their **motivation** is affected by the lack of recognition and assessment of their results.

All this inhibits the relationship with **voice and choice** in participation and decision making in the school, in order to improve the learning process of the students and to close inequality gaps.

Conclusions: the first major incoherence occurs in the alignment, where, despite the formal declaration as a priority, the emphasis is not on *learning* (according to the RISE framework), but rather on *access, compliance and patronage or others*; with a fundamentally *isomorphic* approach. Then, in the relations, the incoherencies are evident in *delegation, finances and information*, especially when dealing with *sub elements such as curricular management, budget, teachers-human resources, and information (EMIS)* between *compact, management and voice and choice*. However, it is necessary to consider that these incoherencies are the result of the incoherencies presented in *politics*, in the relationships between the 5 functions of the State that represents citizenship.

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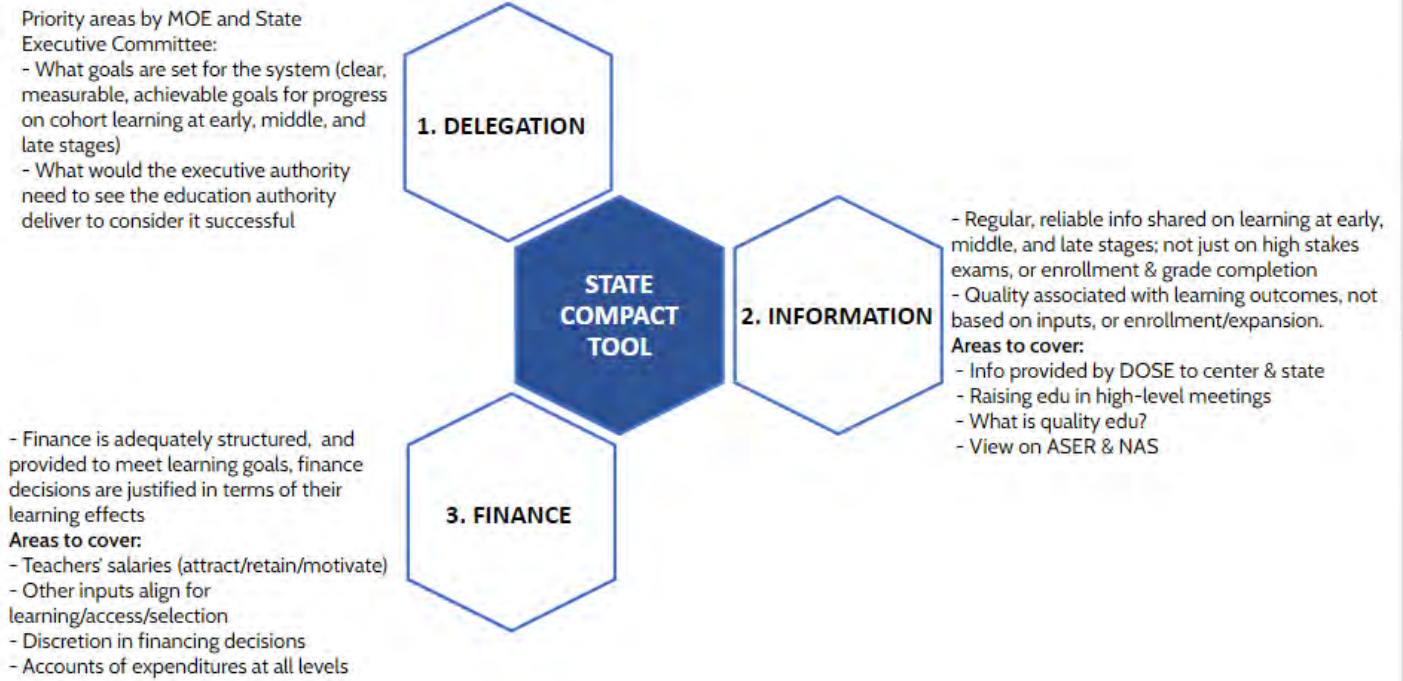
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Example materials from the stakeholder workshops and interviews

Data collection instruments by the **Central Square** **Foundation** team from their diagnostic pilot in **a state in** **northern India**

State Executive, Fiduciary, and Planning Authorities Data Collection Tool

A. COMPACT SECTION:



I. DELEGATION & INFORMATION: (45 min)

1. High-Level Targets & How Is Information Structured?

<p>What are the priority areas in education by the National Education Ministry (MOE)?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What goals are set for the system (clear, measurable, achievable goals for progress on cohort learning at early, middle, and late stages)? 	
<p>What are the priority areas in education by the state education ministry?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What would the executive authority need to see the ministry of education deliver to consider it to be successful? 	
<p>What information is provided by DOSE on the performance of the state education authority to:</p> <p>A. Central Government?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based on what information does executive/fiduciary authorities evaluate performance of education authorities? - How is it provided, how frequently? - If multiple reports are provided, dive 	

<p>B. State Government?</p> <p>a. EM & CM (Executive)</p> <p>b. Fiduciary authorities</p>	<p>into broad components of each to check how reports are different from each other in what they report on?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What parameters are of high importance/prominence in the reports? (on: learning, utilization of funds, procurement, access & attainment)? <p>Check:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is regular, reliable information shared on learning at early, middle, and late stages in education (not just high stakes) - How important is this? - Is it merely a process compliance exercise? 	
<p>What are the key indicators that determine the performance of the education department?</p>	<p>Probe: What does it mean to perform well? What is the most important indicator?</p>	
<p>How often is education raised in state's high level meetings as a discussion point? Examples?</p>	<p>Probe examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What platforms? - Who participated? What came out of these meetings? - Was there any follow-ups/plan of action? 	

2. How Does The System Determine Education is of Sufficient "Quality"?

<p>What features define "quality" education? What main/minimum features must be met for the system to be confident that education is of sufficient quality?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how do you define quality of education? - what comes from top as definition quality education -- how similar/different are these? - how is quality of education understood at lower levels of the system? 	
<p>What is the system's view of results of independent learning assessments such as ASER?</p> <p>What is the system's view of results of centrally conducted sample surveys, such as NAS?</p>	<p>Check: Does the system consider these as an indicator of quality education? In what light?</p>	

II. FINANCE: (40 min)

1. How Is Finance For Education Structured?

<p>Please elaborate on the process of financing decisions for both types of budgets -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Center (PAB) - State 	<p>- Which authority takes the final decision on the education budget?</p> <p>- Is this authority the same for state and central budgets?</p> <p>- How are decisions on approval or rejection of any type of allocation made? - are these related to learning info?</p>	
<p>What are the components of the education budget?</p>	<p>Have there been any changes in the finding patterns in the last five years? Examples?</p>	
<p>What factors/reasons/results are considered while identifying activities for funding?</p>	<p>- Are effects on learning a focus while deciding on any kind of allocations? If not, then for what is considered? - Access?</p>	
<p>How are new initiatives funded?</p>	<p>- Who takes decisions on them?</p> <p>- Are initiatives generated at the state level or anything proposed from the field?</p> <p>- What info forms the basis of introduction of new programs and policies in the system? Examples?</p>	
<p>What info is used to evaluate the performance of the existing programs?</p>	<p>How often is it reviewed?</p> <p>Is the performance impacting financing decisions? – interlinking with finance?</p>	

2. Discretion and Account

<p>Is there any provision (on paper) for making financing decisions (provision for budgets) at the following levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - District - Block - Cluster 	<p>Why or why not?</p> <p>Nudge on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - District Annual Plan - School Development Plan <p>If yes, over what all activities they have discretion to manage and spend funds for?</p>	
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- School	Check if innovation for learning is supported?	
What is the process for planning spending of budget components? What are the timelines for sanctioning various grants ? Are all grants sanctioned at the same time?	If not, why? Any delays?	
If, yes, how do delays affect the functioning of school or quality of learning?		
How is fund utilization currently being monitored at State and Central level ?	Reported by whom to whom? When? How?	
How do you monitor/track the expenditures of inputs at school?		
Any impact analysis done for the spendings? If yes, how does that impact feed into future decision making ?	Any analysis done by Center or State mechanisms to collect data and use in future planning? If done so, then what are the parameters of assessment?	

3. Human Resources/How is financing for teachers structured?

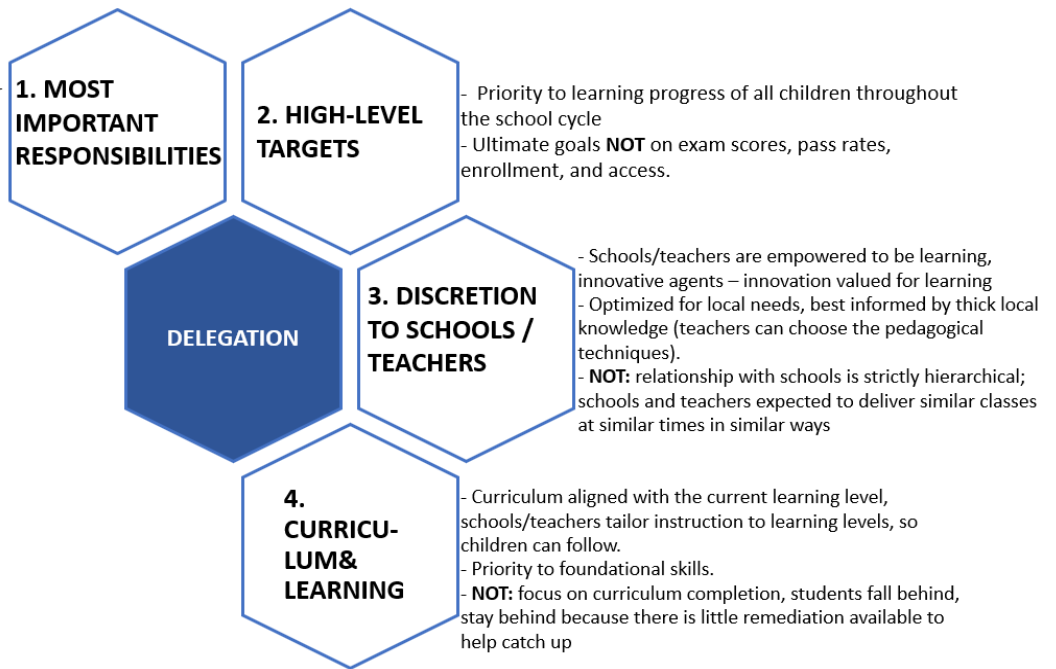
What are the ministry's priorities for teachers? What are the ministry's priorities for teacher recruitment?	What is good quality teaching for you? What according to you are the key parameters for teachers to be considered competent in their profession? Probe: - What are good teachers according to them? - What is prescribed by the state to determine good teachers - What is understood at lower levels.	
How are teachers and non-teachers recruited?	What are the parameters? if not quality, then why?	
What is the structure (components) and provisions for teachers' salary?	Does that vary with the different levels that the teacher is hired for? such as primary vs secondary?	

According to you, does teacher salary attract good teachers/good teaching?		
What provisions are available in the salary which help in retaining and motivating teachers?	If not, should there be any? - incentive structures? performance-based increments or promotions?	
Does ACR play any role in determining salaries of Teachers? If no, how are they incentivised for good performance?	Guide: Whether any component is variable based on performance such that it motivates or retains teachers to do well	
How do promotion, appraisal, and recognition of teachers promote good teaching practices?	- Are indicators thin or thick? - probe examples - How prominently are teaching practices considered for these?	
How do placements, transfers, and exits of teachers promote good teaching practices?	- Are indicators thin or thick? - probe for examples - How prominently are teaching practices considered for these?	

B. MANAGEMENT SECTION:

1. DELEGATION:

- Focus on teaching, not teachers - what happens in classroom, rather than number of teachers, their formal qualifications.
- Not on metrics for EMIS, exam scores, and pass rates in exam years



<p>What are your key/top 3 responsibilities? How much time do you spend on each in a given month/week?</p>	<p>Their understanding of what responsibilities are vs how they actually match up to time spent?</p>	
<p>What are your key goals/targets?</p>	<p>Check for: Do these align with key responsibilities?</p>	
<p>What are the goals/targets received by you in relation to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrollment? - Dropouts? - Scores & pass % in secondary level of schooling/board exams? - Mentoring or Training teachers? - Learning outcomes? 	<p>Check for: Does the cluster/block have specific learning targets? How were these communicated?</p>	
<p>Which functions/responsibilities does the system prioritize the most?</p>	<p>Hypothesis: authority to admin functions instead of academic functions down the line (beyond district level)</p>	

<p>What targets do you give to people down the line? How do you break them down?</p>	<p>Check for: How are they communicated? Examples - circulars? verbal?</p>	
<p>How would you define a successful school? (low priority)</p>	<p>Check for: Their perception - School: ask them to describe the type of activities/areas the school would focus on, what the students and teachers in the school would be doing)</p> <p>Alignment with responsibilities and targets</p> <p>Have you been told what a successful school or teacher would look like?</p>	
<p>What curriculum do teachers teach in the classroom? What is done differently in the education reform programme? How does the curriculum/syllabus/the education reform programme align with Learning Outcomes?</p>	<p>Check for: Their perception on alignment between content in the education reform programme, LOs and syllabus. Need to validate perceptions across all levels</p>	
<p>Secondary classes are more important than primary classes. Do you think this statement is true? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Check for focus on foundational learning. Probe for real/on-ground scenario</p>	

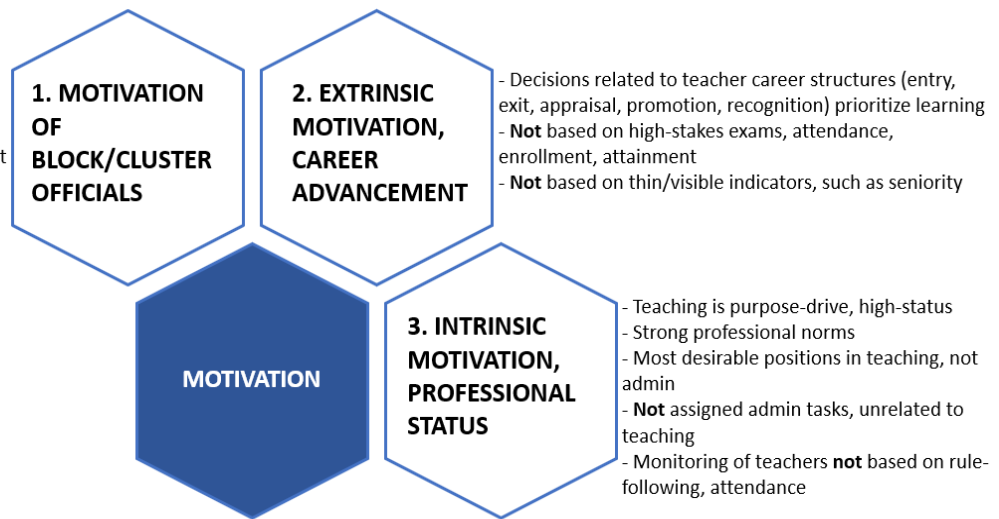
2. INFORMATION:

<p>What is the purpose of EMIS? Which EMIS are frequently used by the education authority?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Usage areas - What is the difference in usage of UDISE vs. the state-level EMIS? 	
<p>Who decides what information is to be collected on EMIS? How are the indicators prioritized?</p>	<p>How frequently is the EMIS updated?</p>	
<p>Is the information available on EMIS used for decision-making at top? If yes, what decisions - examples? If no, why not?</p>	<p>Why is there a need felt to continuously ask for updated information from the teachers?</p>	
<p>Is the information available on EMIS used for decision-making at the level of smaller administrative units)? If yes, how?</p>		
<p>What meetings (review) happen at the state level for the following, and how frequently?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District ● Block ● Clusters ● Teachers 	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What gets discussed in these meetings? ● How is the agenda decided? ● What decisions get taken and based on what data? Examples 	
<p>- What kinds of inspection visits take place and what is the purpose of such visits in schools? - What should be the main focus area according to you? - Who decides what information to collect?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <p>a) focus on learning oriented info/teaching practices b) is there discretion in what to collect at lower levels?</p>	
<p>What type of assessments are conducted in an academic year? What purpose do these serve for the system?</p>	<p>When are these conducted - fixed frequency? How do results from school based exams and other assessments feed back into the system to improve performance of students/learning outcomes? At what level?</p>	
<p>Why?- <i>purpose of each</i>? How is data from results used?</p>	<p>SA: check learning, FA: inform classroom practice, Baseline: programmatic intervention, NAS: health check; Spot checks</p>	

	<p>What decisions feeding into?- mentoring, training, programmatic interventions - action plans</p> <p>-Check for: exams designed to check for understanding and application - what rubric is followed?</p>	
<p>Who does the following?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design exams? 2. Conduct exams? 	<p>Rationale for designing</p> <p>What exams are designed at the school level?</p>	
<p>Is data from exams reliable?</p>		
<p>Is there pressure to drive good results?</p>		

3. MOTIVATION:

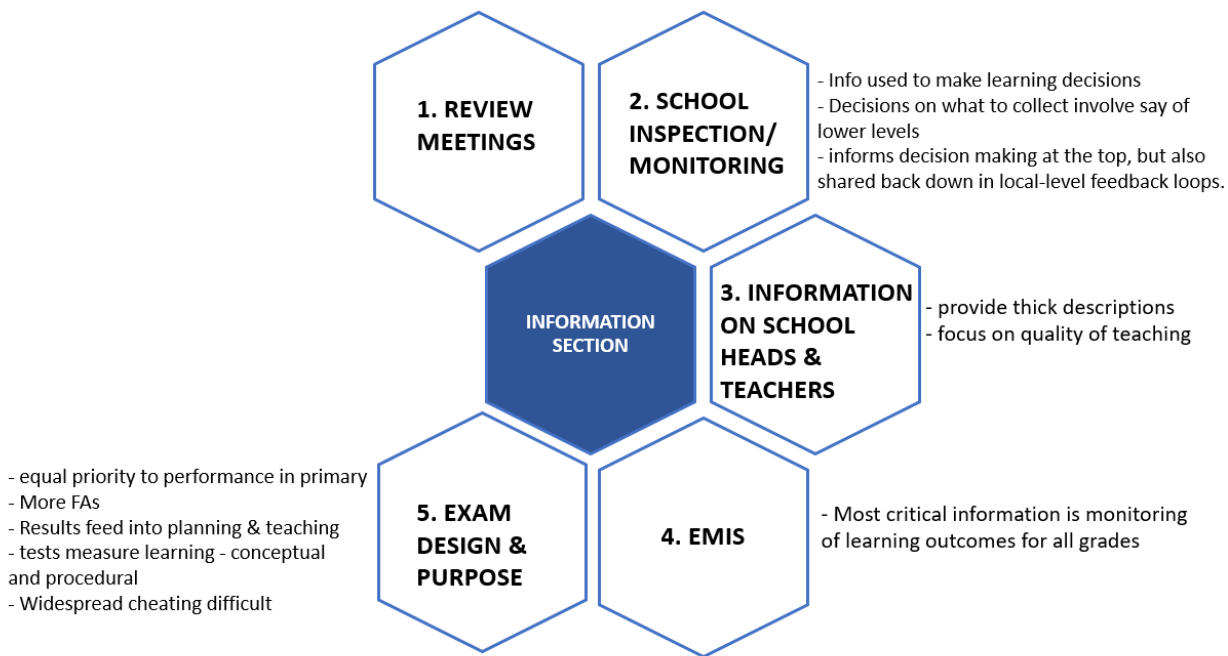
- officials feel they have agency and autonomy to take decisions
- pivotal role to play in learning success
- Not postman who take orders or do what told



<p>What according to you drives the following to perform their jobs well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Admin officials (district, block, cluster) ● teachers and head teachers <p>What is the education department's strategy to ensure high motivation of the above employees?</p>		
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<p>Who does improvement in learning levels in the state depend the most on?</p>	<p>Probe: view on</p> <p>a) administrators - if they are believed to have agency over decisions?</p> <p>b) teachers - if they are thought to have the autonomy to influence learning levels?</p>	
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4. SUPPORT (SCERT):



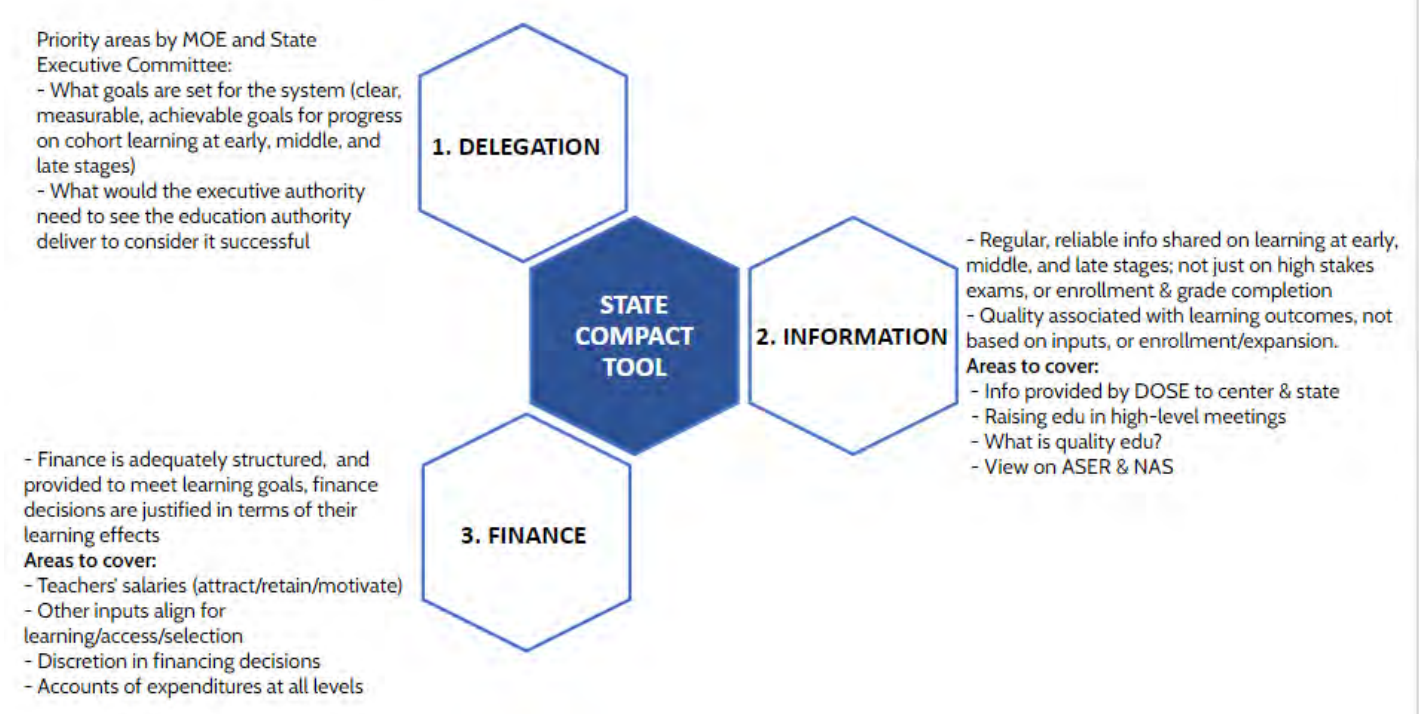
<p>How is training conducted? Please elaborate on the structure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the design of training? - What is the frequency of in-service training every year? - Who provides the training? <p>Cascade model or not</p> <p>Hands - on practice/coaching mentoring?</p>	
<p>How do you support teachers or What support is extended post training?</p>	<p>Probe: Mentoring and Coaching aspects</p>	
<p>What has been the change in training in the last 3-4 years in terms of the kind of</p>		

themes/topics covered?		
How is their effectiveness assessed? If yes, what has been the change actioned basis that impact?		
Is there any training needs assessment conducted? If not, How are the training needs taken into account?	Guide: How are decisions related to developing training content made?	
What is your opinion of the Pre - service training currently provided?		
What according to you is the scope of improvement?		
What kinds of teaching-learning material are provided to the schools?		
How do you ensure support to schools and teachers for instructional material?	Training on instructional materials only if not covered earlier	
How is their utilization and impact assessed? What according to you is the ideal mechanism for this?		
Does the school create its own TLM, if yes, what type of TLM?		
What training and support do you receive in your role?	1. Block and cluster officials Capacity building 2. Scope of work - too much admin work	
What are the existing gaps, if any, which hinder you from your performance?		
What kinds of training did you receive before and during service?	-Can you give me a few examples of things you used from these training sessions? -Is feedback collected from you at the end of training? How? -What are some areas where training provided can be improved?	

Add: Do you have any recommendations for targets that are set, information that is collected, finance and budgeting, motivation, and support?

State Resource Group Data Collection Tool

A. COMPACT SECTION:



I. DELEGATION & INFORMATION:

1. High-Level Targets & How Is Information Structured?

<p>What are the priority areas in education by the National Education Ministry (MOE)?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What goals are set for the system (clear, measurable, achievable goals for progress on cohort learning at early, middle, and late stages)? 	
<p>What are the priority areas in education by the state education ministry?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What would the executive authority need to see the education authority deliver to consider it successful? 	
<p>What info is provided by DOSE on the performance of the state education authority, to:</p> <p>A. Central Government?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based on what information does the executive evaluate the performance of education authorities? - How is it provided, how frequently? - If multiple reports dive into broad 	

<p>B. State Government?</p> <p>a. EM & CM (Executive)</p> <p>b. Fiduciary authorities</p>	<p>components of each - how are reports different in what they report on?</p> <p>- What parameters are of high focus in the reports? (on: learning, utilization of funds, procurement, access & attainment)?</p> <p>Check:</p> <p>- Is regular, reliable info shared on learning at early, middle, and late stages in education (not just high stakes) - how important is this?</p> <p>- Is it merely a process compliance exercise?</p>	
<p>What are the key indicators that determine the performance of the education department?</p>	<p>Probe: What does it mean to perform well? Which is the most important indicator?</p>	
<p>How often is education raised in state's high level meetings as a discussion point? Examples?</p>	<p>Probe examples: What platforms? Who participated? What came out of these meetings? Was there any follow-ups/plan of action?</p>	

2. How Does The System Determine Education Is Of Sufficient "Quality"?

<p>What features define "quality" education? What main/minimum features must be met for the system to be confident that education is of sufficient quality?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <p>- How do you define quality of education?</p> <p>- What comes from the top as a definition of quality education? How similar/different are these?</p> <p>- How is quality of education understood at lower levels of the system?</p>	
<p>What is the system's view of results of independent learning assessments such as ASER?</p>	<p>Check: Does the system consider these as an indicator of quality education? In what light?</p>	
<p>What is the system's view of results of centrally conducted sample surveys, such as NAS?</p>		

II. FINANCE

1. How is finance for education structured?

Elaborate on the process of finance budgets/financing decisions at: A. Centre (PAB) B. State	- Which authority takes the final decision on the education budget? - same for state and central budgets? - How are decisions on approval/rejection of allocations made? - are these related to learning info?	
What are the components of the education budget ?	Have there been any changes in the funding patterns in the last five years ? Examples?	
What factors are considered while identifying activities for funding ?	- Are effects on learning a focus while deciding on allocations? If not, what is considered? - Access?	
How are new initiatives funded ?	- Who takes decisions on them? - What info forms the basis of introduction of new programs and policies in the system? Examples? - Are initiatives proposed at the state level or anything proposed from the field?	
What info is used to evaluate the performance of the existing programs ?	How often is it reviewed? Is the evaluation impacting financing decisions?	

2. Discretion and Account

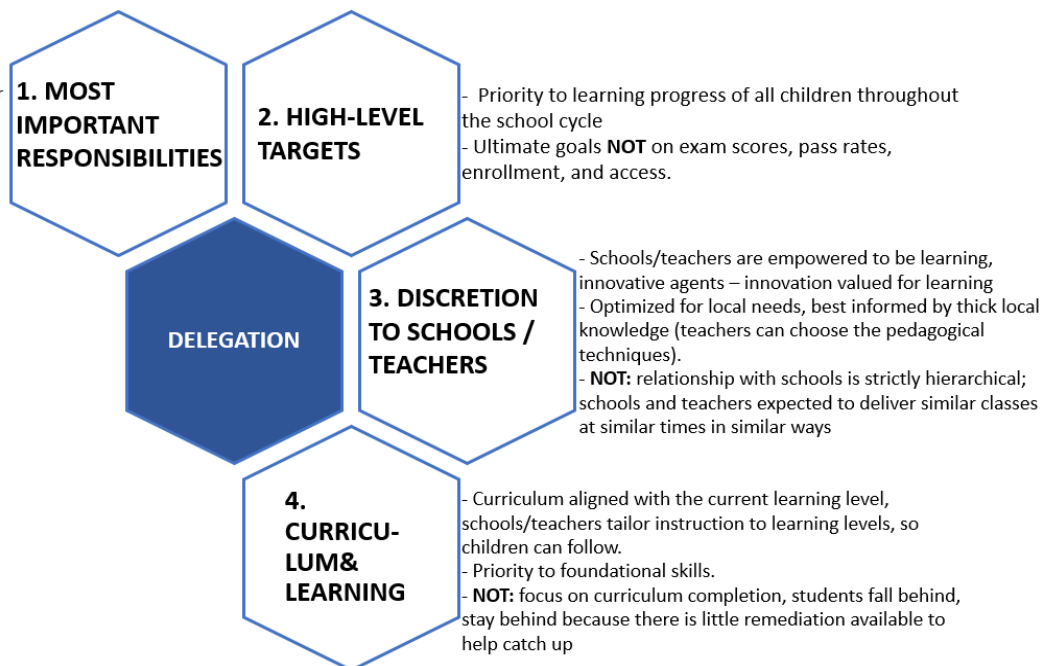
Is there any provision (on paper) for making financing decisions (provision for budgets) at the following levels? : - District - Block - Cluster - School	Why or why not? Nudge on: - District Annual Plan - School Development Plan If yes, over what all activities they have discretion to manage and spend funds for? Check if innovation for learning is supported	
What is the process for planning spending of budget components? What are the timelines for sanctioning various grants ?	Are all grants sanctioned at the same time? - If not, why? Any delays?	

If, yes, how do delays affect the functioning of school or quality of learning?		
How is fund utilization currently being monitored at State and Central level ?	Reported by whom to whom? When? How?	
How do you monitor/track the expenditures of inputs at school?		
Any impact analysis done for the spendings? If yes, how does that impact feed into future decision making ?	Any analysis done by Centre or State mechanism to collect data and use in future planning? If done so, then what are the parameters of assessment?	

Any recommendations for budgeting and planning process? - at your level/higher level

B. MANAGEMENT SECTION:

- Focus on teaching, not teachers - what happens in classroom, rather than number of teachers, their formal qualifications.
- Not on metrics for EMIS, exam scores, and pass rates in exam years



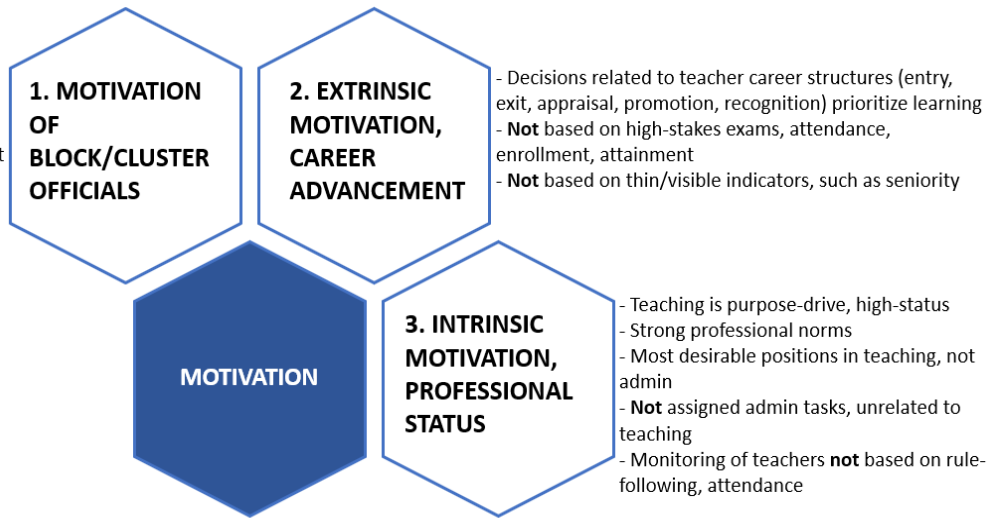
1. DELEGATION

<p>What are your key/top 3 responsibilities?</p>	<p>Their understanding of what responsibilities are vs how they actually match up to time spent?</p>	
<p>What are your key goals/targets?</p>	<p>Check for: Do these align with key responsibilities? What are the goals/targets received by you in relation to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrollment - Dropouts - Exam scores - Mentoring or Training teachers 	

	- Learning outcomes	
What targets do you give to people down the line? How do you break them down?	Check for: How are they communicated? Examples - circulars? verbal?	
Which functions/responsibilities does the system prioritize the most?	Hypothesis: authority to admin functions instead of academic functions down the line (beyond district level)	
What curriculum do teachers teach in the classroom? What is done differently in the education reform programme? How does the curriculum/syllabus/the education reform programme align with Learning Outcomes?	Check for: Their perception on alignment between content in the education reform programme, LOs and syllabus. Need to validate perceptions across all levels	
How is TLM utilization and impact assessed? What according to you is the ideal mechanism for this?	- What support/training is provided on use of the TLM? - Recommendations for assessing utilization and impact?	
Does the school/teachers create its own TLM, if yes, what type of TLM?		
Is equal importance given to secondary classes and primary classes in the system?	Check for focus on foundational learning. Probe for real/on-ground scenario	

2. MOTIVATION:

- officials feel they have agency and autonomy to take decisions
- pivotal role to play in learning success
- Not postman who take orders or do what told



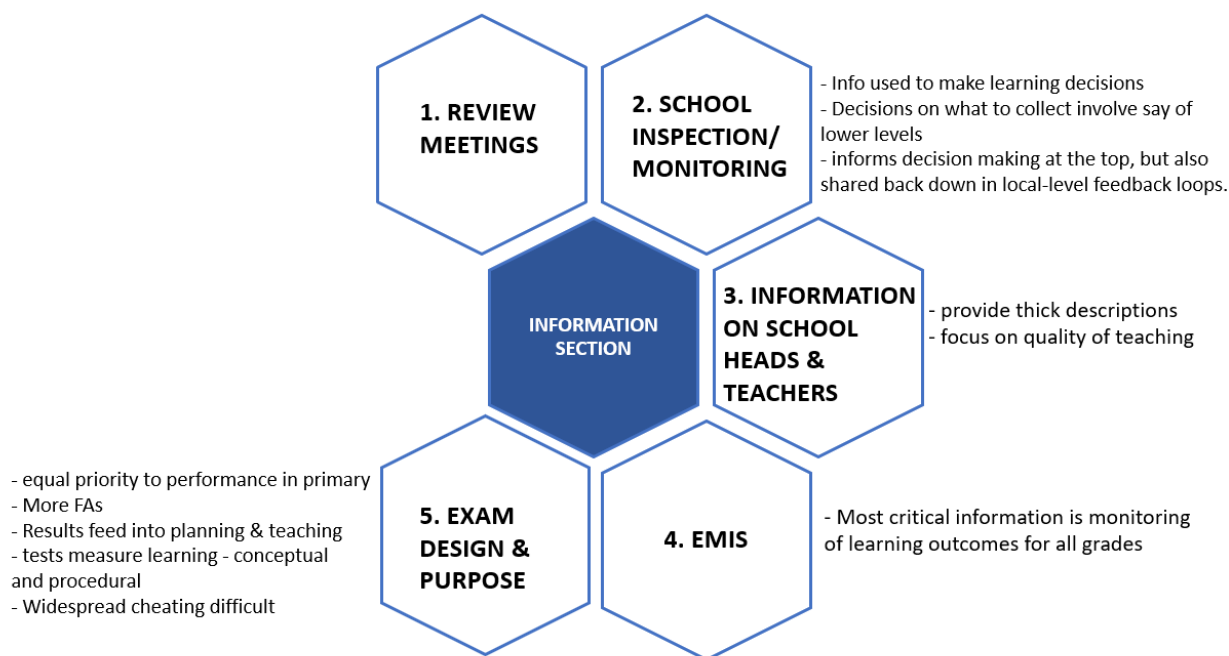
<p>What according to you drives the following to perform their jobs well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Admin officials (district, block, cluster) ● teachers and head teachers <p>What is the education department's strategy to ensure high motivation of the above employees?</p>		
<p>What is good quality teaching for you?</p>	<p>What according to you are the key parameters for teachers to be considered competent in their profession?</p> <p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is it according to you? - What is prescribed by the state? - What is understood at lower levels? 	
<p>According to you, does teacher salary attract good teachers/good teaching?</p>	<p>What provisions are available in the salary which help in retaining and motivating teachers?</p> <p>If not, should there be any?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - incentive structures? performance- 	

	based increments or promotions? - Check the role of ACR	
Recommendations for retaining and motivating good teaching ?		

3. SUPPORT:

How is teacher training conducted? Please elaborate on the structure	- What is the design of training? - Hands - on practice - What is the frequency of in-service training every year? - Who provides the training? Cascade model or not	
What support is extended post training?	Probe: Mentoring and Coaching aspects	
What has been the change in training in the last 3-4 years in terms of the kind of themes/topics covered?		
How is the effectiveness of training assessed? How do you use the information from such assessments for future decisions?		
Do you have any recommendations to improve training programmes?		
What is your opinion of the quality Pre - service training currently provided?		
What according to you is the scope of improvement?		
What training and support do you receive in your role?	- What are the existing gaps, if any, which hinder you from your performance? - - What are some areas where training provided can be improved?	

4. INFORMATION



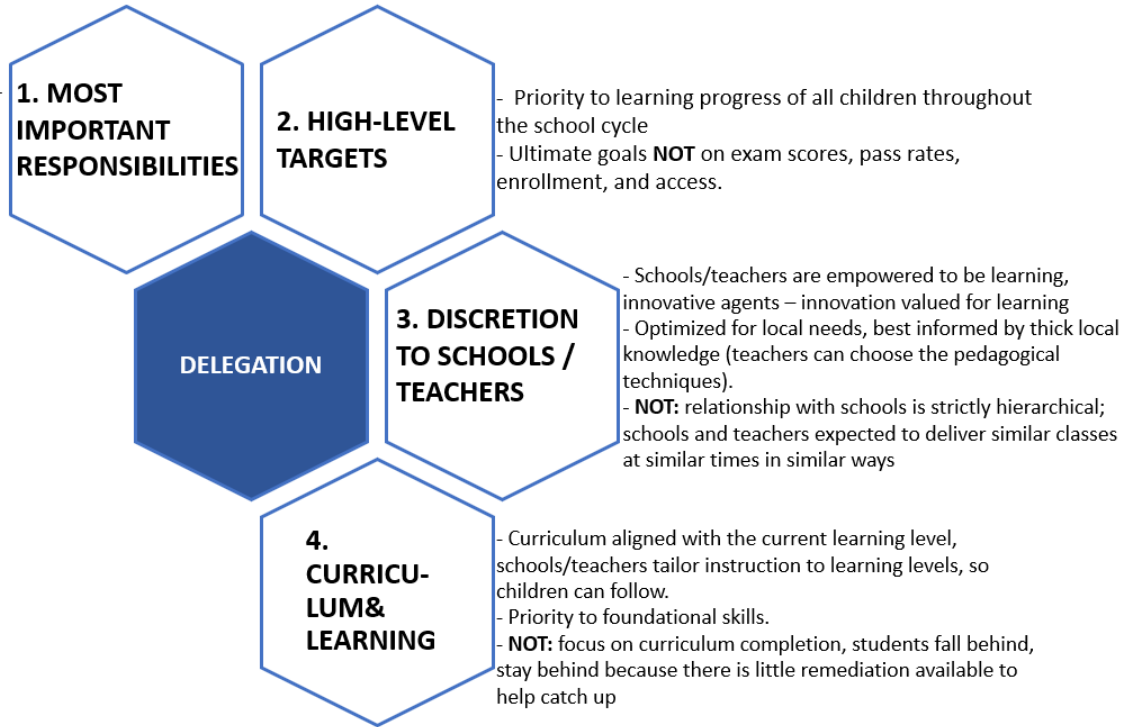
Which EMIS are frequently used by the education authority? What is the purpose/example of usage of EMIS ?	Probe: - Usage areas - What is the difference in usage of UDISE vs. the state-level EMIS?	
Is the information available on EMIS used for decision-making at top ? If yes, what decisions - examples? If no, why not?	Why is there a need felt to continuously ask for updated information from the teachers?	
Who decides what information is to be collected on EMIS? How are the indicators prioritized ?	How frequently is the EMIS updated?	
Is the information available on EMIS used for decision-making at the level of smaller administrative units ? If yes, how?		

<p>What meetings (review) happen at the state level for the following, and how frequently?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District ● Block ● Clusters ● Teachers 	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What gets discussed in these meetings? ● How is the agenda decided? ● What decisions get taken and based on what data? Examples 	
<p>- What kinds of school visits take place? What is the purpose of visits in schools?</p> <p>- What should be the main focus area according to you?</p> <p>- Who decides what information to collect?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <p>a) focus on learning oriented info/teaching practices</p> <p>b) Is there discretion in what to collect at lower levels?</p>	
<p>What type of assessments are conducted in an academic year? What purpose do these serve for the system?</p>	<p>When are these conducted - fixed frequency?</p> <p>How do results from school based exams and other assessments feed back into the system to improve performance of students/learning outcomes? At what level?</p>	
<p>Why? - <i>purpose of each</i></p> <p>How is data from results used?</p>	<p>SA: check learning, FA: inform classroom practice, Baseline: programmatic intervention, NAS: health check; Spot checks-what decisions feeding into - mentoring, training, programmatic interventions - action plans</p> <p>Check for: exams designed to check for understanding and application - what rubric followed?</p>	
<p>1. Who designs exams? 2. Who conducts exams</p>	<p>Rationale for designing exams - do these test procedural mastery and conceptual knowledge?</p> <p>What exams are designed at the school level?</p>	
<p>Is data from exams reliable?</p>		
<p>Is there pressure to drive good results?</p>		

District Data Collection Tool

DELEGATION:

- Focus on teaching, not teachers - what happens in classroom, rather than number of teachers, their formal qualifications.
- Not on metrics for EMIS, exam scores, and pass rates in exam years



1. Responsibilities

<p>What are your key/top 3 responsibilities? + Time spent on these in a month?</p>	<p>Are these academic responsibilities?</p>	
<p>In the overall system, what work is prioritized as dictated by the department?</p>	<p>Admin vs academic</p>	

2. Targets

<p>What are your key targets? - Enrollment, dropout, exam scores, pass %, Mentoring & training, Learning/LO How are targets communicated to you?</p>	<p>- Learning targets of all children throughout the school cycle? - Are the targets communicated through circulars or verbal?</p>	
<p>How do you break them down the chain?</p>	<p>How is it communicated? - written/verbal</p>	

3. Schools

<p>How would you define a successful school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type of activities/areas the school would focus on - What would the students and teachers in the school be doing? - Have you been told what it should look like? 	
<p>What kind of decisions are schools and teachers given flexibility over?</p>	<p>Check for: local discretion Freedom to adapt learning: TB, TLM, pedagogy Inputs: uniforms, infrastructure</p>	

4. Innovation

<p>Statement check:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovation occurs and is valued - Innovation is discouraged and seen as too risky <p>Give examples</p>		
<p>Have you observed innovation? What types?</p>	<p>Focus on types of innovation: for learning, for enrollment and attainment, for higher test scores</p>	

5. Curriculum and Learning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What curriculum does a teacher teach in the classroom? - What is done differently in the state education reform program? - How does the above align with Learning Outcomes? 	<p>Check for: Their perception on alignment between the state education reform program content, LOs and syllabus.</p>	
<p>Secondary classes are more important than primary classes. Do you think this statement is true? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Check for focus on foundational learning. Probe for real/on-ground scenario</p>	

FINANCE:

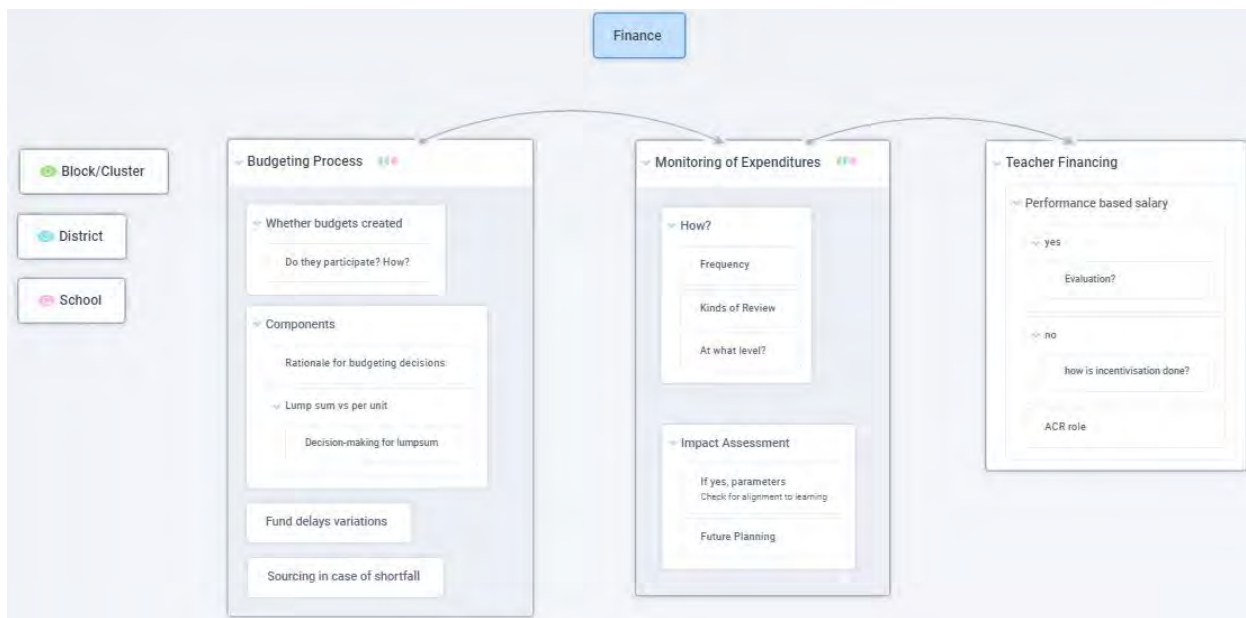
- financing decisions justified on relationship to learning, **NOT** attendance, enrollment, exam scores
- centralized funding, but discretion in allocation of funds at lower levels
- **NOT** mostly financed in-kind (no delegation of discretion on how to spend)



- Info used to make learning decisions
- Decisions on what to collect involve say of lower levels
- Financing strategies lead to organizational learning on what leads to achieving learning objectives
- **Not** towards raising scores or tertiary enrollment, access, enrollment



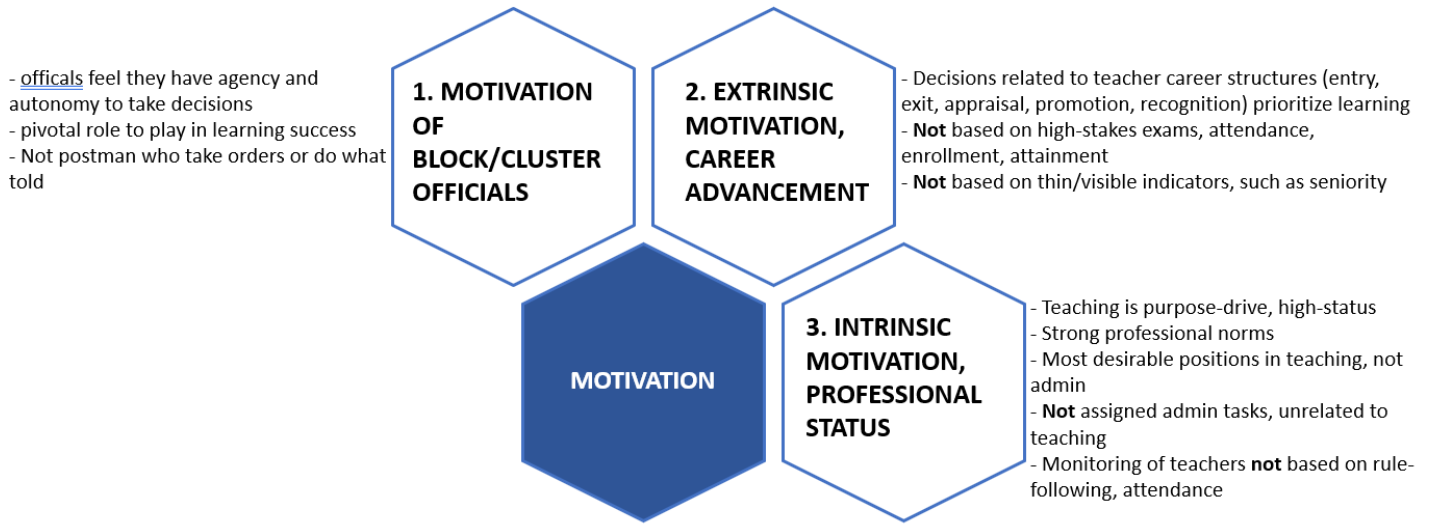
- Teacher comp (base, pensions, incentives) attracts, selects, retains, and motivates good teaching >> student learning
- **Not tilted** toward higher grades or enrollment
- Spending a lot may attract higher quality applicants but does nothing to select, retain, or motivate; discourage necessary turnover



1. Budgeting Process			
District	State	School	Probes
Do you create budgets for your district? How does the budgeting process work at the district level? –	Do you participate in state level planning?	Do schools in your district create their budget ?	Discretion in managing/allocating funds at all levels
What are the heads in the budget , and what are they based on? - Are all sanctions made in Lump sum form or per unit form? - If lump sum, how do they make decisions to spend the lump sum			Rationale which informs budgeting decisions?

<i>amount?</i>			Check if there is a format?	
Do you usually get the required funds ? Any delays or variations from state?		Any funds demande d by schools that are not part of the existing allocations ?	What are the sources of funds if they fall short of funds?	
If you don't receive any fund as per requirement, how do you manage ?		Do they receive it? If not, how do they raise it?		
2. Tracking of Expenditures				
How do you track the expenditures for your budget at district level?	How does state level tracking of expenditures take place? What is discussed in review of budgets ?	How do you track the expenditures for your budget at school level?	Frequency of tracking/reviewing? Kinds of review (process: doc submission/calls)? At what levels?	
How are previous programmes assessed? - impact on field If yes, then what are the parameters of assessment? - parameters for assessment Is this future planning done based on this assessment? - Future planning			How do financing decisions meet learning objectives? Check, if there is organizational learning over time to achieve learning objectives?	
3. Teachers' financing				
Do teachers' salaries vary based on their performance ? <i>If yes, what is evaluated in their performance/ by you or anyone?</i> <i>Does ACR play any role?</i> <i>If no, how are they incentivised for good performance?</i>			Is variable compensation a part that motivates or retains teachers to do well?	
Does your salary have a performance linked component?				

MOTIVATION:



1. Motivation of Officials:

How satisfied do you feel in your job?	Rating 1 to 5 with fingers/thumb up?	
What motivates you to continue with the job?	Aligned with professional and financial incentives	
What do you not like about your job, why?	Where are the gaps?	
How much does improvement in learning levels in your district depend on you ?	Do they view themselves as cogs in a wheel or as decision makers?	
If given an additional 10% budget to improve learning , how would you use it?	Check agency	

2. Extrinsic Motivators/Career Advancement & Job Security:

What do you think motivates teachers to excel in jobs?	financial incentives, adequate support, strong professional norms, role clarity	
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How is teaching viewed as a profession in their society?	High-status? Brightest people attracted to teaching?	
What is the process of a) promotion? b) appraisals (ACR)? c) recognition of teachers?	- focus on teaching practice and learning information (thick indicators) - probe state system to provide recognition - foreign visits, etc.	
What is the process of d) transfers? e) deputation? f) exits?	- focus on teaching practice and learning information - probe if admin jobs are more attractive than teaching jobs?	

3. Intrinsic Motivators/ Teacher Professional Status:

What are the key parameters for teachers to be considered excellent professionals OR define quality teachers?	- Probe good teachers according to them - What is prescribed by the state?	
What percentage (%) of teachers in your block/cluster meet these parameters?	Do they think teachers in their area are good? If yes, why? If not, why not/what are they doing?	
How confident are you that teachers understand what's expected of them?		

SUPPORT:

1. Teacher training

How is training conducted?	-Delivery (Hands on practice/practical application/lecture type)? - What is the frequency of in-service training every year? - Who provides the training?	
What has been the change in training in the last 3-4 years in terms of the kind of themes/topics?	Any shift towards LO based training?	
What kind of support is extended post training?	Mentoring and coaching	
Is any training need assessment conducted before those training? - If yes, what all was asked? - If no, how are decisions related to developing training content made?/how are training needs accounted for ?		
How did you assess training's impact on teachers' work/practices?	Guide: Any gaps identified by you? How was the information used for further planning?	
What is your opinion of the Pre - service training currently provided?	Any gaps? What is the scope of improvement?	

2. Instructional Material

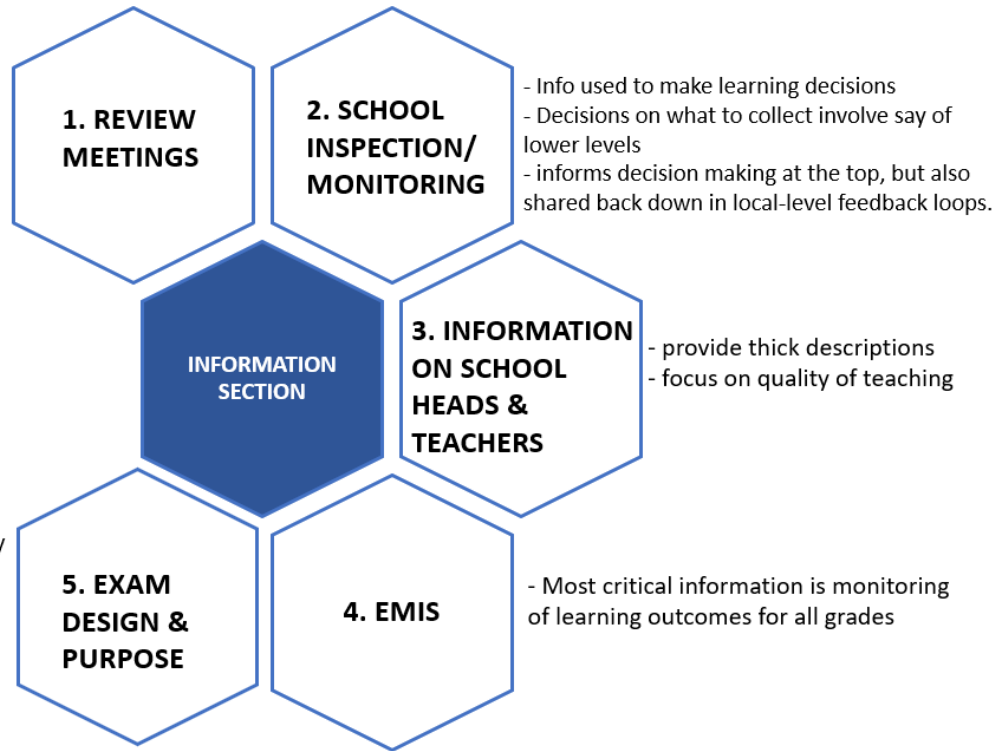
What kinds of instructional materials (or teaching-learning material) are provided to the schools?	Nudge on: TB, Supplementary TLM, Print - rich teacher resources	
What support is given to schools and teachers for instructional material?	Check for training on instructional materials, only if not covered earlier	
How is their utilization and impact assessed? Probe for improvement, or if no answer received, check what according to them is		

the ideal mechanism for this?		
Does the school create its own TLM , if yes, what type of TLM?		

3. Support for district level officials

What training and support do you receive in your role?	<p>Examples of kinds of training during District level service?</p> <p>Type: District level capacity building for mentoring/coaching</p> <p>Check for: Scope of work - too much admin work</p>	
How did you apply learnings from these training sessions?	<p>-Examples of things you used from these training sessions?</p> <p>-Is feedback collected at the end of training? How?</p>	
What are the existing gaps in training and support provided, if any?	<p>- What are the gaps?</p> <p>- What is the scope of improvement?</p> <p>-Areas where training provided can be improved?</p>	

INFORMATION:



1. Review Meetings:

Discuss at State, District, Cluster (schools) level:

What is the process?	At what level? What is the agenda? How is it decided?	
Who is the chair and attendees?		
How often do these happen?		
What decisions are taken?	examples of action points from recent meetings at various levels	

2. Monitoring/School Inspection:

What is the general process?	What guidelines have come from the top? Any format prescribed? What usually happens?	
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Who is involved in the process? Who decides what to collect?	Are they involved in deciding what to collect? Check autonomy	
What type of information is collected?	Is information on learning collected?	
Why is it collected?	What is the purpose of collecting ? (learning)	
How is the information collected?	Tools used ? - Darpan App/Paper-based	
When: frequency of visits?	Average visits per school in a month/academic year?	
Where is the information used?	Eg. from a recent visit	

3. Information For School Heads/Teachers:

What information is collected to evaluate the performance of teachers?	What are the parameters? – Quality of classroom instruction and teaching practice	
Who decides what to collect?	Are they involved in deciding what to collect? Check autonomy	
How frequently?		
How is it used?	What decisions does it feed into? training needs, mentoring, coaching	
What feedback do you provide?	probe for examples - is feedback provided in groups or individually? - is feedback provided on teaching practice - is it thick feedback - do you discuss action points and is there a follow-up on identified development areas?	

4. EMIS Portal

What type of information is added to the state-level EMIS?	What are the parameters? – Quality of classroom instruction and teaching practice	
Why? purpose?	Are lower levels involved in deciding what to collect? - autonomy?	
Who 1. collects?	Check discretion at their level	

2. decides what to collect? 3. accessible to?		
When is it updated?		
How is it used?	What decisions does it feed into? Do they have autonomy to make these decisions?	
Which information is important/focused on by i) you? ii) system? iii) is important, but currently not captured?	Is learning related information prioritized?	

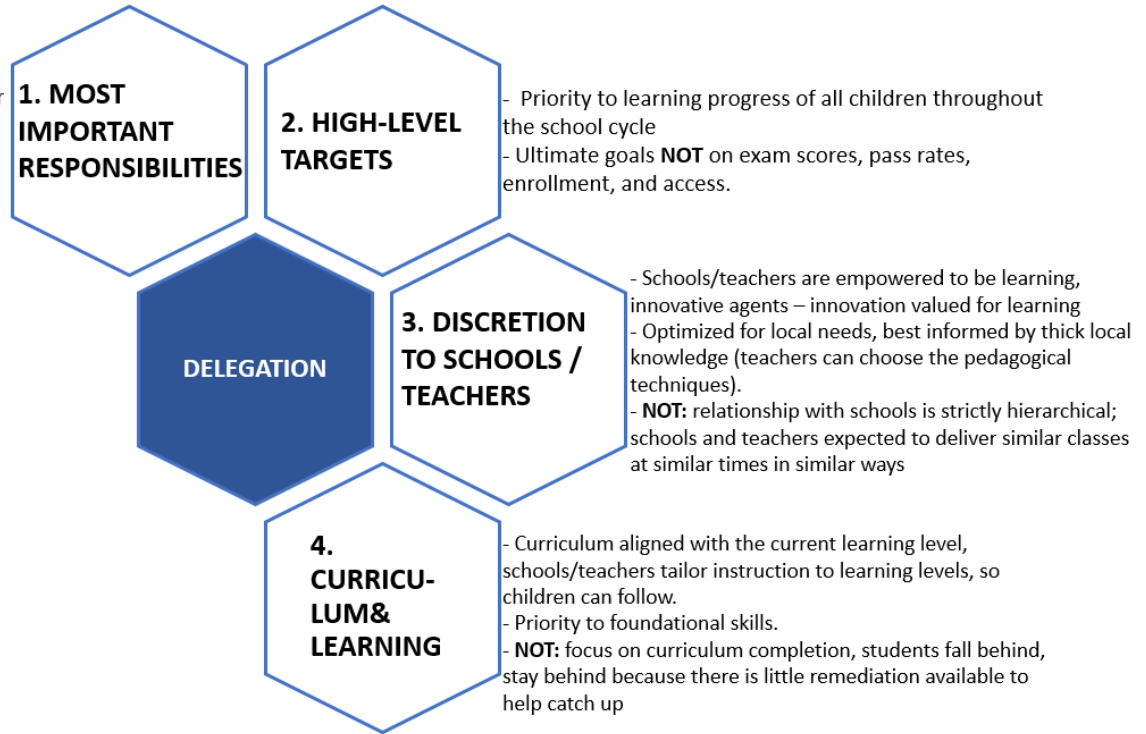
5. Exam/Assessment Design & Purpose:

What type of assessments are conducted in an academic year?	FAs; spot checks - process?	
When are these conducted?	Fixed frequency?	
Why? What is the purpose of each? How is data from results used ?	SA: check learning, FA: inform classroom practice, Baseline: programmatic intervention, NAS: health check; Spot checks What decisions feeding into?- mentoring, training, programmatic interventions - action plans -Check for: exams designed to check for understanding and application - what is the rubric followed?	
Who does the following: 1. Design exams 2. Conduct exams		
Is there pressure on you to drive good results in your district?		
Are large-scale assessments reflective of the learning level of students in your block/cluster?	If yes, do you use this information? If no, what are the gaps?	

Block/Cluster Data Collection Tool

DELEGATION:

- Focus on teaching, not teachers - what happens in classroom, rather than number of teachers, their formal qualifications.
- Not on metrics for EMIS, exam scores, and pass rates in exam years



1. Responsibilities

What are the key/top 3 responsibilities?	Check for time spent on each	
Which functions hold the most priority ?	Admin vs academic	

2. Targets

What targets are you given?	Enrollment, dropout, exam scores, pass percentage (%), Mentoring & training, Learning/LO	
How are targets communicated to you?	How are the targets communicated? - written or verbal	
How do you break them down the chain?	How are the targets communicated?	

3. Schools

<p>How would you define a successful school?</p>	<p>- Type of activities/areas the school would focus on - What would the students and teachers in the school be doing?</p> <p>Have you been told what it should look like?</p>	
<p>What kind of decisions are schools & head teachers given flexibility over?</p>	<p>Check for: Freedom to adapt learning: TB, TLM, pedagogy Inputs: uniforms, infrastructure</p>	

4. Innovation

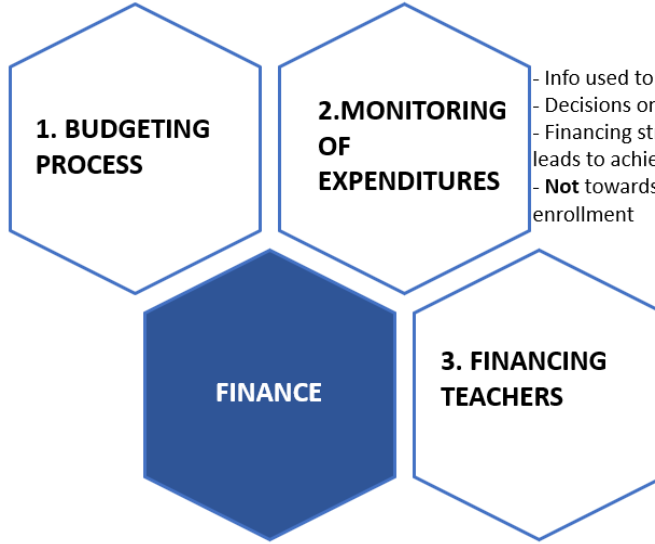
<p>Statement check: - Innovation in schools occurs and is valued - Innovation in schools is repressed and seen as too risky.</p>	<p>Valued vs repressed</p>	
<p>Have you observed innovation? What types?</p>	<p>Focus on types of innovation: for learning, for enrollment and attainment, for higher test scores</p>	

5. Curriculum and Learning

<p>What is taught? What is done differently in the state education reform program? How does the above align with Learning Outcomes?</p>	<p>Check for: Their perception on alignment between the state education reform program content, LOs and syllabus.</p>	
<p>Secondary classes are more important than primary classes Do you think this statement is true? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Check for focus on foundational learning. Probe for real/on-ground scenario</p>	

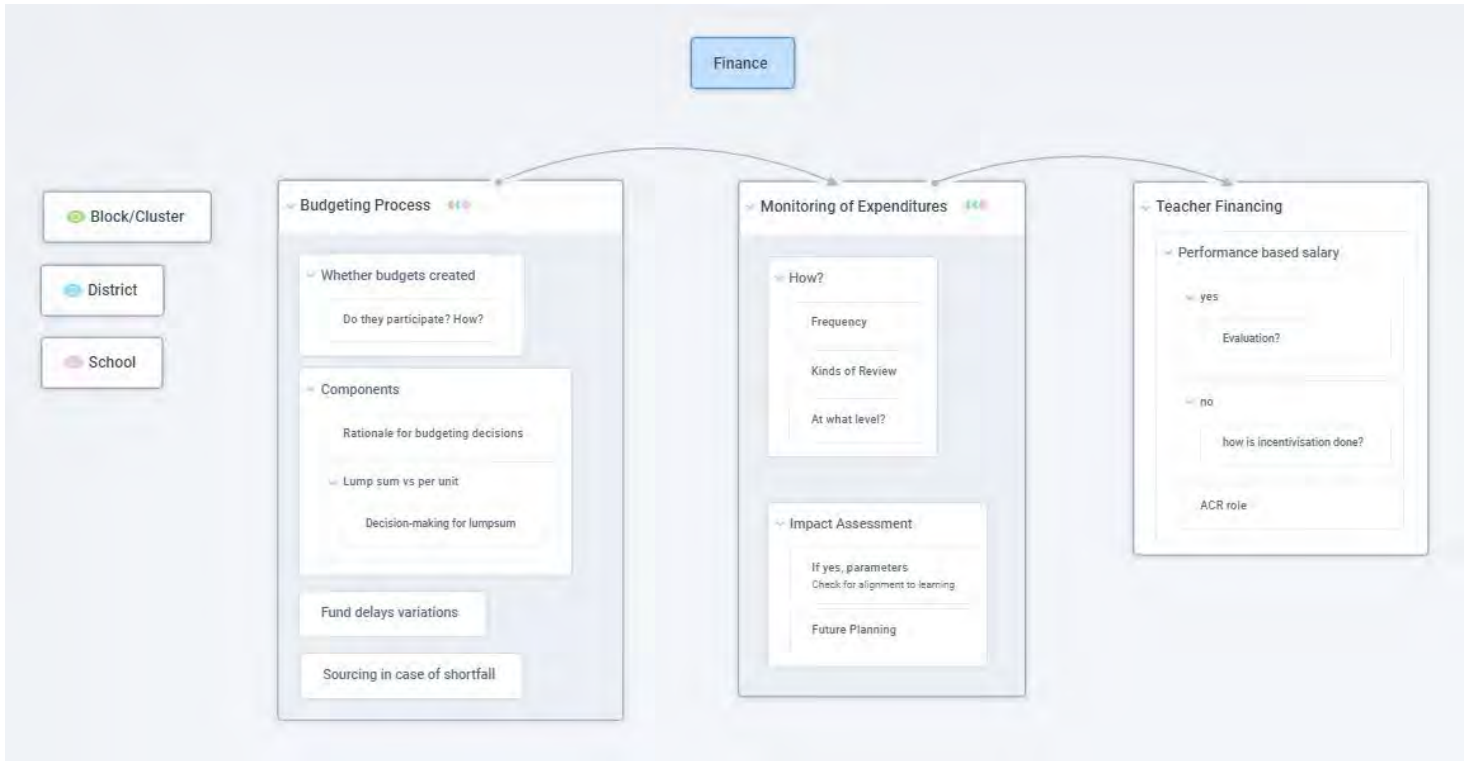
FINANCE:

- financing decisions justified on relationship to learning, **NOT** attendance, enrollment, exam scores
- centralized funding, but discretion in allocation of funds at lower levels
- **NOT** mostly financed in-kind (no delegation of discretion on how to spend)



- Info used to make learning decisions
- Decisions on what to collect involve say of lower levels
- Financing strategies lead to organizational learning on what leads to achieving learning objectives
- **Not** towards raising scores or tertiary enrollment, access, enrollment

- Teacher comp (base, pensions, incentives) attracts, selects, retains, and motivates good teaching >> student learning
- **Not tilted** toward higher grades or enrollment
- Spending a lot may attract higher quality applicants but does nothing to select, retain, or motivate; discourage necessary turnover

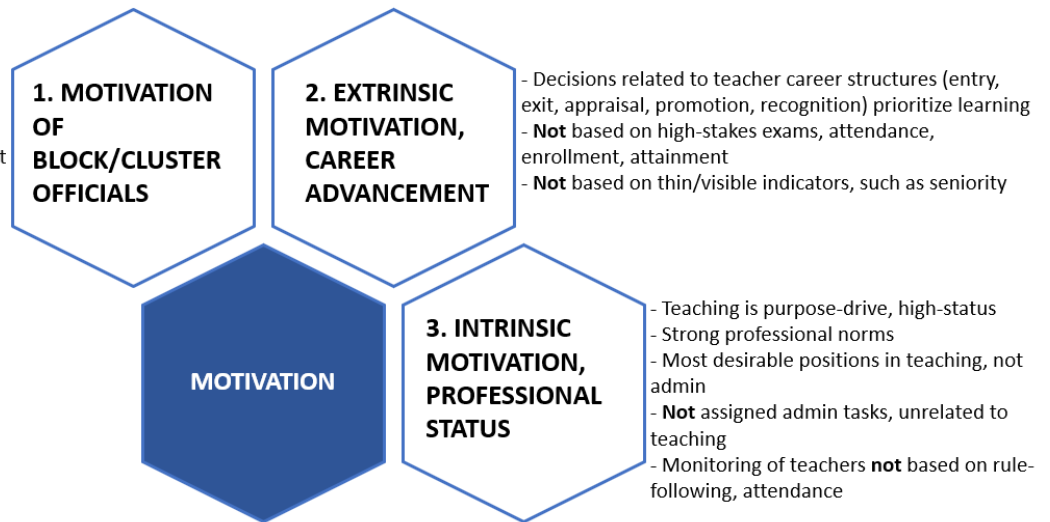


1. Budgeting Process			Probes	
Block / Cluster	District / Block	School		
Do you create budgets for your block/cluster?	Do you participate in district level planning?	Do schools in your block create their budget ?	Discretion in managing funds at all levels DAP, SDP	
What are the components (heads/items) of your budget and why? - Are all sanctions made in Lump sum form or per unit form? - If lump sum, how do they make decisions to spend the lump sum amount?	What are all components prepared in the district budget and why?	What are the components prepared in the school budget and why?	Rationale which informs budgeting decisions	
Do you usually get the required funds ? Any delays or variations from district or state? If you don't receive any fund as per requirement , how do you manage?		Any funds that are demanded by schools that are not part of the existing allocations ? Do they receive it?	Sources of funds if they fall short of funds	
2. Monitoring of Expenditures				
How do you monitor/track the expenditures or inputs for you budget at block level?	How does district level monitoring take place? What is discussed in review of budgets ?	How do you monitor/track the expenditures or inputs for you budget at school level?	Frequency Kinds of review (online, in person, documentation) (process: doc submission/calls) At what levels?	
Impact assessment: Previous interventions assessed? Parameters for assessment: If done so, then what are the parameters of assessment?			How do financing decisions are made to meet learning objectives?	

<p>Future planning: How is future budget planning done based on this assessment? Block or district?</p>	<p>Check, if there is organizational learning over time to achieve learning objectives?</p> <p>We need to know if there is thin or thick accounts</p>	
<p>3. Teachers' financing</p>		
<p>Do teachers' salary components vary based on their performance?</p>	<p>If yes, what is evaluated in their performance by you or anyone? (Does ACR play any role?)</p> <p>If no, how are they incentivised for good performance?</p>	
<p>Do your salaries vary based on your performance?</p>		

MOTIVATION:

- officials feel they have agency and autonomy to take decisions
- pivotal role to play in learning success
- Not postman who take orders or do what told



1. Motivation Of Officials:

How satisfied do you feel in your job	Rating 1 to 5 with fingers/thumb up?	
What motivates you to continue with the job	Aligned with professional and financial incentives	
What do you not like about your job, why?	Where are the gaps?	
How much does improvement in learning levels in your block/cluster depend on you?	Do they view themselves as cogs in wheel or as decision makers?	
If given an additional 10% budget to improve learning , how would you use it?	Check agency	

2. Extrinsic Motivators/Career Advancement & Job Security:

How is teaching viewed as a profession in their society?	High-status? Brightest people attracted to teaching?	
What do you think motivates teachers to excel in jobs?	financial incentives, adequate support, strong professional norms, role clarity	
What is the process of a) promotion? b) appraisals (ACR)? c) recognition of teachers?	- focus on teaching practice and learning information (thick indicators) - probe state system to provide recognition - foreign visits, etc.	
What is the process of d) transfers? e) deputation? f) exits?	- focus on teaching practice and learning information - probe if admin jobs are more attractive than teaching jobs?	

3. Intrinsic Motivators/ Teacher Professional Status:

What are the key parameters for teachers to be considered excellent professionals OR define quality teachers ?	- Probe good teachers according to them - What is prescribed by the state?	
What percentage (%) of teachers in your block/cluster meet these parameters?	Do they think teachers in their area are good? If yes, why? If not, why not/what are they doing?	
How confident are you that teachers understand what's expected of them?		

SUPPORT:

1. Teacher training

How is training conducted ?	- Design (Hands on practice/practical application/lecture type)? - What is the frequency of in-service training every year? - Who provides the training?	
What is the support for extended post training ?	Mentoring and coaching	
What has changed in training in the last 3-4 years in terms of the kind of themes/topics ?	Any shift towards LO based training?	
Is any training need assessment conducted before the training? If yes, what all was asked?	If no, how are decisions related to developing training topics made?	
How did you assess training's impact on teachers' work/practices?	Guide: Any gaps identified by you? How was the information used for further planning?	
What is your opinion of the Pre - service training currently provided?	Any gaps? What is the scope of improvement?	

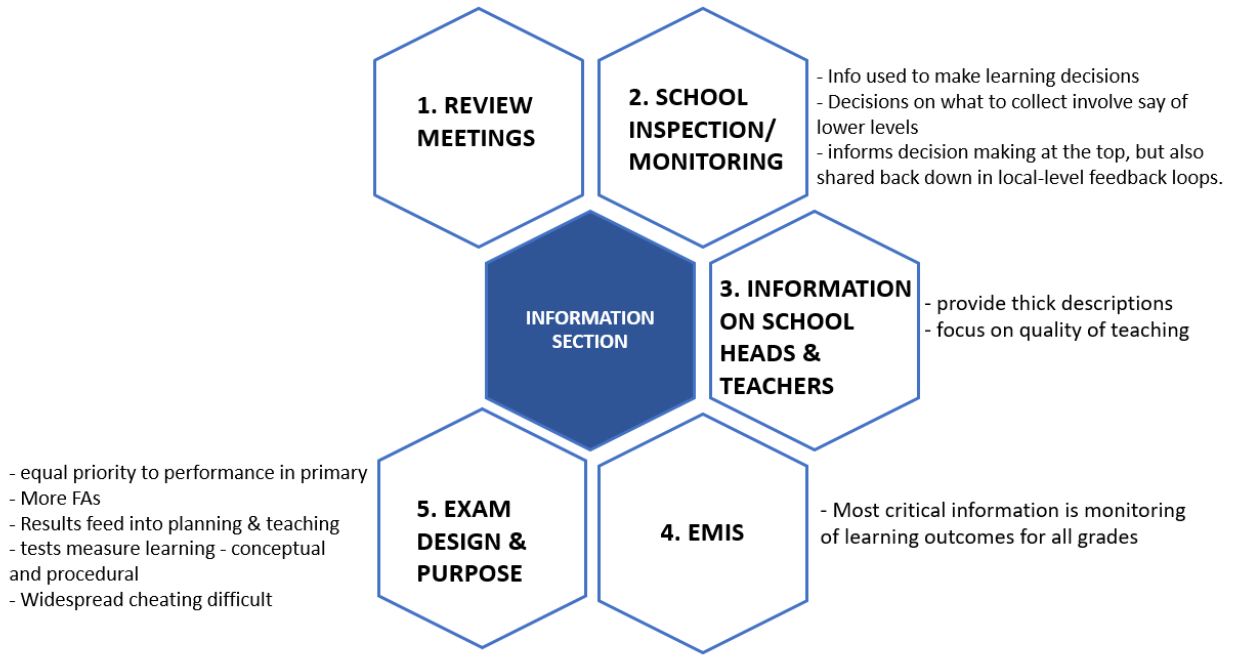
2. Instructional Material

What kinds of instructional materials (or teaching-learning material) are provided to the schools?	Nudge on: TB, Supplementary TLM, Print - rich teacher resources	
What support is given to schools and teachers for instructional material?	Check for training on instructional materials, only if not covered earlier	
How is their utilization and impact assessed? Probe for improvement, or if no answer received, check what according to them is the ideal mechanism for this?		
Does the school create its own TLM , if yes, what type of TLM?		

3. Support for cluster/block level officials

<p>What training and support do you receive in your role?</p>	<p>Examples of kinds of training during block and cluster officials service?</p> <p>Type: Block and cluster officials capacity building for mentoring/coaching</p> <p>Check for: Scope of work - too much admin work</p>	
<p>How did you apply learnings from these training sessions?</p>	<p>-Examples of things you used from these training sessions?</p> <p>-Is feedback collected at the end of training? How?</p>	
<p>What are the existing gaps in training and support provided, if any?</p>	<p>- What are the gaps?</p> <p>- What is the scope of improvement?</p> <p>-Areas where training provided can be improved?</p>	

INFORMATION:



1. Review Meetings:

Discuss at State, District, Cluster (schools) level:

What is the process?	At what level? What is the agenda? How is it decided?	
Who is the chair and attendees?		
How often do these happen?		
What decisions are taken?	eg. of action points from recent meetings at various levels	

2. Monitoring/School Inspection:

What is the general process?	What guidelines have come from the top? Any format prescribed? What usually happens?	
Who is involved in the process? Who	Are they involved in deciding what	

decides what to collect?	to collect? Check autonomy	
What type of information is collected?	Is information on learning collected?	
Why is it collected?	What is the purpose of collecting ? (learning)	
How is the information collected?	Tools used ? - Darpan App/Paper-based	
When: frequency of visits?	Average visits per school in a month/academic year?	
Where is the information used?	Eg. from a recent visit	

3. Information For School Heads/Teachers:

What information is collected to evaluate the performance of teachers?	What are the parameters? – Quality of classroom instruction and teaching practice	
Who decides what to collect?	Are they involved in deciding what to collect? Check autonomy	
How frequently?		
How is it used?	What decisions does it feed into? training needs, mentoring, coaching	
What feedback do you provide?	probe for examples - is feedback provided in groups or individually? - is feedback provided on teaching practice - is it thick feedback - do you discuss action points and is there a follow-up on identified development areas?	

4. EMIS Portal:

What type of information is added to the state-level EMIS?	What are the parameters? – Quality of classroom instruction and teaching practice	
Why? purpose?	Are lower levels involved in deciding what to collect? - autonomy?	
Who	Check discretion at their level	

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. collects? 2. decides what to collect? 3. accessible to? 		
When is it updated?		
How is it used?	What decisions does it feed into? Do they have autonomy to make these decisions?	
Which information is important/focused on by <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) you? ii) system? iii) is important, but currently not captured? 	Is learning related information prioritized?	

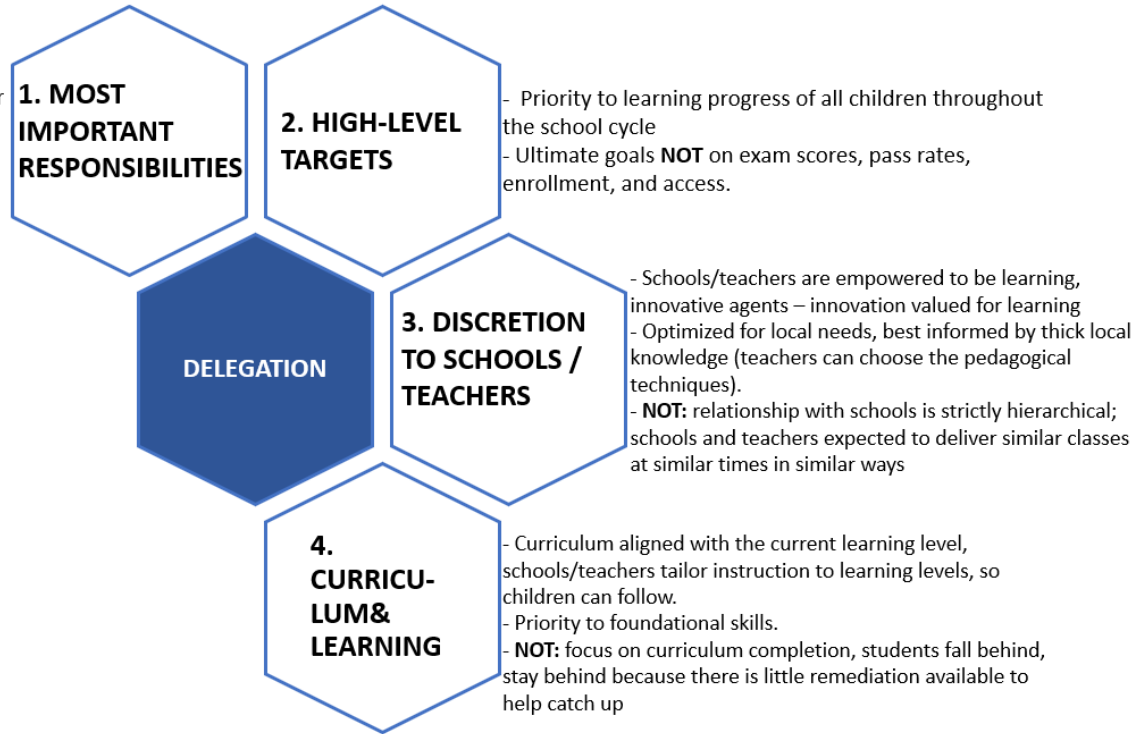
5. Exam/Assessment Design & Purpose:

What type of assessments are conducted in an academic year?	FAs; spot checks - process?	
When are these conducted?	fixed frequency?	
Why? What is the purpose of each? How is data from results used ?	SA: check learning, FA: inform classroom practice, Baseline: programmatic intervention, NAS: health check; Spot checks What decisions feeding into?- mentoring, training, programmatic interventions - action plans -Check for: exams designed to check for understanding and application - what is the rubric followed?	
Who does the following? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design exams? 2. Conduct exams? 		
Are large-scale assessments reflective of the learning level of students in your block/cluster?	If yes, do you use this information? If no, what are the gaps?	

Teacher Data Collection Tool

DELEGATION:

- Focus on teaching, not teachers - what happens in classroom, rather than number of teachers, their formal qualifications.
- Not on metrics for EMIS, exam scores, and pass rates in exam years



1. Responsibilities

<p>What are the key/top 3 responsibilities?</p>	<p>Check for time spent on each</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching (instructional time) and Classroom Management - Assessment Record Keeping - Data Collection and Register Maintenance (based on requests from block/district office) - Training - School Management (including HR, Finance, maintenance, etc) - Any other work (ask for examples) 	
<p>Which functions hold the most priority?</p>	<p>Admin vs academic</p>	

2. Targets

What targets are you given?	(a) Enrollment, (b) Dropouts, (c) Teaching (d) Learning Outcomes (Learning level targets possible), (e) Any other	
How are targets communicated to you?	How are the targets communicated? - written or verbal?	
How do you break them down the chain?	How are the targets communicated?	

3. Schools

How would you define a successful school?/How do you define success for your school?	type of activities/areas the school would focus on, what the students and teachers in the school would be doing Have you been told what it should look like?	
What kind of decisions are schools & headteachers given flexibility over?	Check for: Freedom to adapt learning: TB, TLM, pedagogy, etc Inputs: uniforms, infrastructure, etc	

4. Innovation

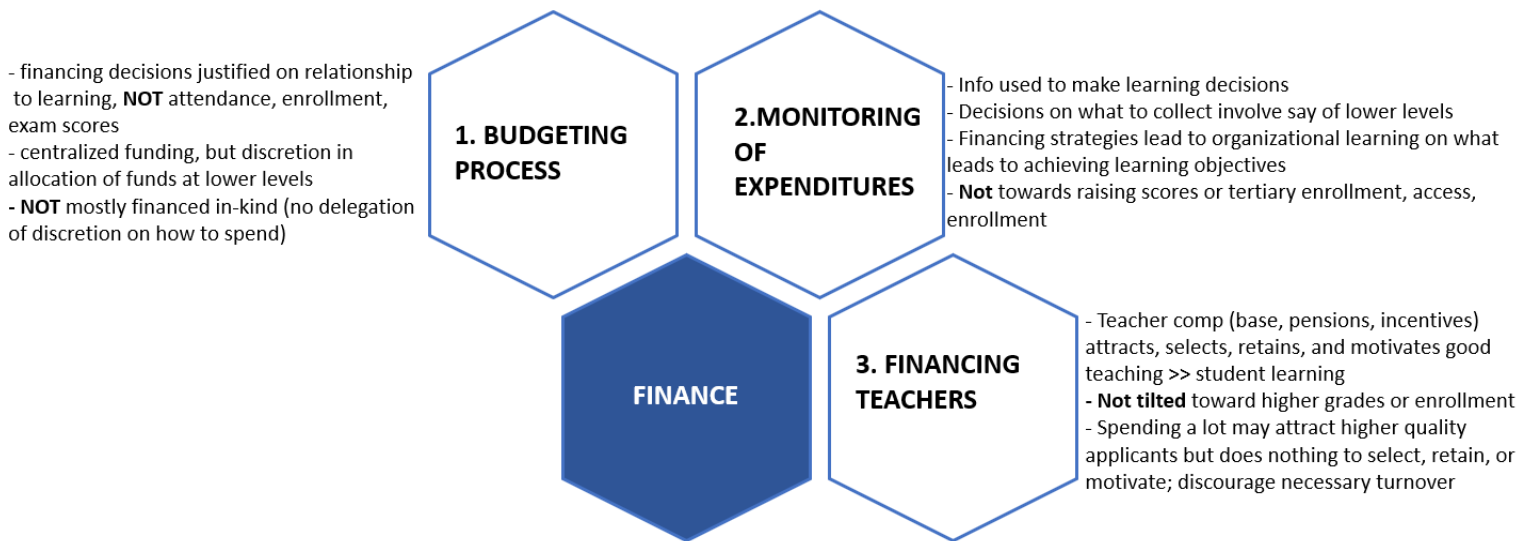
Statement check: - Innovation in schools occurs and is valued - Innovation in schools is repressed and seen as too risky.	Valued vs repressed	
What types of innovation occur in school?	Focus on types of innovation: for learning, for enrollment and attainment, for higher test scores	

5. Curriculum and Learning

What is taught? What is done differently in the state education reform program? How does the above align with Learning Outcomes?	Check for: Their perception on alignment between the state education reform program content, LOs and syllabus.	
Do you think current learning levels of children in your school match what the curriculum expects them to know in that grade?	Check for : Post-COVID scenario	

<p>If a grade 3 child in a classroom has not mastered grade 1 and 2 curriculum, what is a teacher expected to do in this situation?</p>	<p>a. Teach the child based on the grade 3 syllabus and textbook b. Teach the child grade 1 and 2 syllabus and wait for them to master it before moving to grade 3 syllabus c. Any other approach Probe for real/on-ground scenario</p>	
<p>Do you get enough time to remediate skills that children don't know?</p>	<p>Probe for real/on-ground scenario</p>	
<p>Secondary classes are more important than primary classes. Do you think this statement is true? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Check for focus on foundational learning. Probe for real/on-ground scenario</p>	

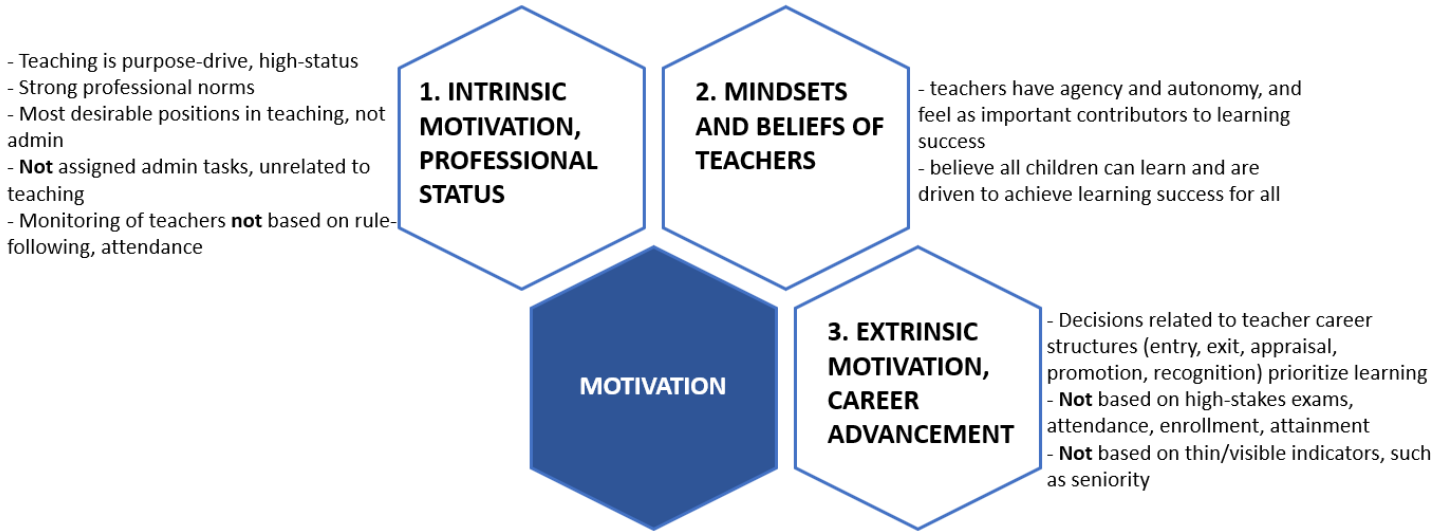
FINANCE:



1. Teacher Salaries (How are teachers financed?)	Probes	
Which pay commission is applied to your salaries right now? What has been the impact on your salaries and its implementation? Anything done better?	Good/Bad/Satisfied and why?	
Are you incentivised based on your performance?	Is that incentive part of your salary? Or separately assigned?	
<p>Yes: How is the performance evaluated, by whom and where, and when is it recorded (example - ACR)?</p> <p>No: What is the regular increment (annual) and under what head?</p>		
<p>Enrolments: Are you compensated/incentivised for working towards increasing enrolments?</p>	<p>If YES: In what forms?</p> <p>If NO: What is the source of motivation to drive enrolments in your region?</p>	
<p>Border Cadre: Have you worked as part of the border cadre?</p> <p>How is the hiring and compensation defined for border cadre teachers?</p>	<p>Any differences or similarities?</p> <p>Any additional recruitment is undertaken?</p>	
<p>2. How are inputs financed? (School's budget)</p>		

Does the school prepare its budget? Process?		
How do you decide what needs to be included in the budget?	Check for School Development plan (How is it integrated with the school development plan?)	
3. Spider v/s Starfish		
How do schools get funds?		
What is requested v/s what is sanctioned? Can you give us a quantum of funds spent for the past 5 years? (Approx %)		
What are the different components you get flexibility to spend for? <i>- Are all sanctions made in Lump sum for or per unit form?</i> <i>- How do you make decisions to spend the lump sum amount?</i>	- Student - Teacher learning - Exams - Enrolment Attendance	
By when do funds reach school every year?	How timely are the budget releases? Any reasons for delay? What are the reasons for the delay?	
How do the cuts and delays impact schools?		
4. Accounts vs Accounting		
Is the school expenditure monitored/tracked? YES/NO		
What is the process ?		
What are the parameters on which school's expenditures are evaluated ?	- Expenditures toward elements contributing to learning outcomes - Expenditures toward elements contributing to Infrastructural inputs	
Whom it is reported to and what frequency ?		

MOTIVATION:



1. Intrinsic Motivation & Professional Status

What motivated you to become a teacher? What motivates you to continue being in this profession?	Probe if the salary directly attracted them to the job and motivates them to stay (if financial incentives are aligned to good teaching)	
How satisfied do you feel with your job?	Probe: Do your supervisors value your work? How do they show recognition? Check: Are salaries an incentive?	
What according to you are the key parameters for you to be considered competent in your profession?	Probe: What comes from the state? How is good teaching evaluated/ensured by your District Coordinators of the education reform program/ Block and cluster officials?	
What are your main challenges at work? What do you not like about your job and why?		
How is your job/profession viewed in society?	Probe: Is it a high/low status profession? Do you think teaching attracts the best minds?	

2. Mindset & Beliefs

How much do you think you can impact the learning of students?	Check for agency	
How much does improvement in learning in your classroom depend on you?	Check for beliefs	
Are there students in your class who are unable to learn? Do you believe they can't learn? Why or why not?	Do teachers think that all children can't learn?	

3. Career Advancement And Job Security & Extrinsic Motivators

What is the process for your promotion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is the criterion for promotion? - Probe how is 'merit' defined in merit-cum-seniority criteria for promotions? - What is the scope of growth in your role? 	
What are some of the benefits you get in your role - leaves, sabbaticals, education opportunities?		
Describe the teacher transfer process. What are some challenges you face if you want to get a transfer done? Are involuntary transfers conducted? How?		
How lucrative are administrative jobs for you?	Do you see yourself moving from academic jobs to administrative jobs?	

SUPPORT:

1. Teacher training

How is training conducted?	- Design :Does the training include aspects such as practical application of content? - What is the frequency of in-service training every year? - Who provides the training?	
What is the support you get post training?	Mentoring and coaching	
What type of training has been provided in the last 5 years? Is there any change in themes/topics covered?	Any shift towards LO based training?	
What according to you is the quality of training?	How useful did you find them for your classroom teaching?	
Was any training needs assessment conducted before the training? If yes, what all was asked?	If not, what are some areas where you feel you need more training?	
What was the design of the Pre-Service Training provided to you?	What kind of practical approaches and/or strategies were taught to you along with theoretical concepts?	
Do you feel that the scope of Pre-Service training should be expanded?	If yes, in what all respects?	

2. Accounts vs. accounting: Delivery of teacher training

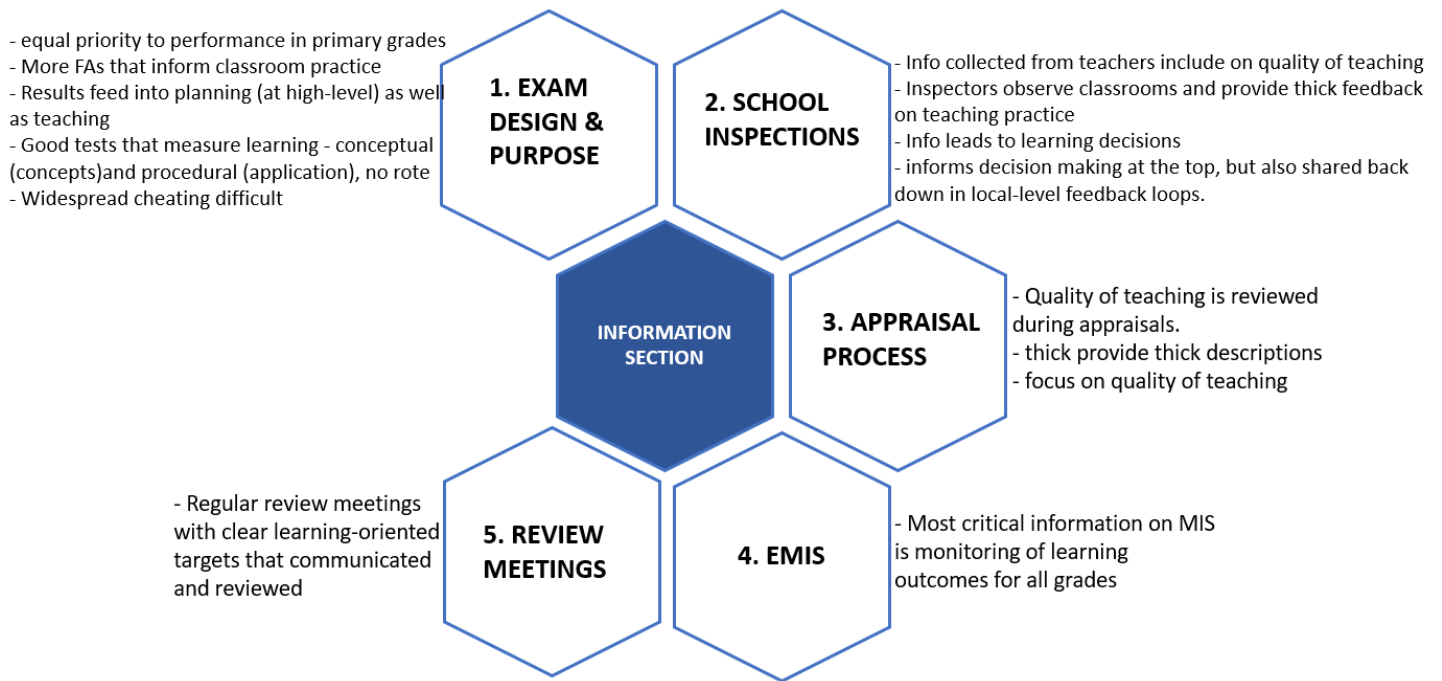
Do you get any on-field support? What kind? How frequently?	Coaching and Mentoring	
Are you satisfied with the support provided by Block and cluster officials?		
What are the parameters on which training is monitored? Who does it?		

Is there any mechanism through which training and trainer quality is assessed?		
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3. Instructional Material

What kinds of instructional materials (or teaching-learning materials) are provided to the schools?	TB, Supplementary TLM, Print - rich Nudge on: Teacher resources	
What support is given to you for instructional material?	Ask about training on instructional materials, only if not covered earlier	
What do you think about the quality of material provided to you?	Please tell us about the good and bad aspects. Are they aligned to each other?	
Is their utilization and impact (fayda) assessed? What is the process?		
What type of material and training is provided to cater to multigrade and multi-level classrooms?		

INFORMATION SECTION:



1. Exam/Assessment Design & Purpose:

<p>What assessments are conducted for students in an academic year?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Type and frequency - Purpose (<i>probe if teachers know the rubric</i>) - Designed by (<i>probe if teachers have freedom in designing exams - if no, do they they want freedom in designing</i>) - Use of data (with examples) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are assessments driven per instructions from the top (i.e., for process compliance)? - Check status of FAs - is there value in holding these?; do these inform teaching practice? - How do you assess the learning levels of students? - push for examples on usage of data from SAs and FAs) 	
<p>Is student performance data (learning outcomes) recorded somewhere - asked by the department? Have you gotten feedback to improve these? At what level?</p>	<p>Probe: do exam results feed back into the system to improve learning outcomes? At what level?</p>	
<p>Do exams (designed by state) test conceptual knowledge (understanding) and procedural mastery (application)? Examples?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if there are good standardized tests, - if current system of examination promotes rote learning/memorization 	

Does cheating happen in exams? At what level? Examples?		
Are large-scale assessments reflective of the learning level of students in your class?	Yes - do you use this information? how? No - what are the gaps?	

2. School Inspection Visits:

How often do administrators visit your schools? Which administrators visit?		
What activities are conducted by them and how much time is spent on each? - Checking records (what records are checked?) - Conducting classroom observations - Filling inspection forms - Sharing feedback - Conducting spot assessments - Any other	Examples from a recent visit	
What information is collected from you about your job?	parameters – quality of classroom instruction and teaching practice	
How is the information collected?		
What is the frequency/length of the visits?		
What feedback do they provide to you? Examples of feedback	Ask for examples - group/ind. Feedback on teaching practice? Is it descriptive feedback? action points – follow-up	

3. Annual Appraisals

What is the process of annual performance appraisal?		
What information about your performance is assessed in the ACR?	Probe: Are there any comments on teaching practice? If yes, examples	

2. What is included in "quality of work" in the ACR?		
3. How descriptive is the appraisal process?	Probe: Do you get detailed feedback on your performance? 2-3 examples	
4. Are there any follow-ups on the feedback you're given to track progress?		

4. EMIS Portal:

What type of information is added to the state-level EMIS?	parameters – quality of classroom instruction and teaching practice	
How is it used?	What decisions does it feed into? Do they have autonomy to make these decisions?	
Which information is important/focused on by: i) system? ii) important but currently not captured?	Is learning related information prioritized?	

5. Review Meetings:

How often do review meetings happen with teachers? At what levels?		
What decisions are taken?	Example of action points from recent meetings at various levels	

VOICE AND CHOICE:

1. Parent Expectations

What are parents' main expectations from the school?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Learning2. Test Scores3. Infrastructure, TB, MDML4. Low fees5. Better teaching/Individualized attention	
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2. Parent Visits

How often do parents visit the school and for what reasons?		
Who do they meet or who can they approach for any difficulties?		
What do they discuss ?		

3. SMC

Is there an SMC in the school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If yes, are teachers/parents a part of it? How are SMCs formed?- If no, do you think there should be a functional SMC for parents to voice their concerns?	
How are SMCs formed?		
Examples of decisions that have been taken by SMCs in the past?	What is the involvement of parents?	
Are they involved in budgeting ? How?	If not, should they be involved in the budgeting process? Why or why not?	
Can you give examples of instances when the community came together to raise a voice related to school education?		
What voices were powerful in the situation? Why?		
Whose voice is not heard ?/Who shows reluctance in participation and why?		

4. Information in PTMs

<p>What information do you provide to parents on student learning?</p>	<p>Check for: Learning Outcome or TaRL data</p>	
<p>What is included in the report card?</p>		
<p>How frequent are PTMs?</p>		
<p>Do all parents attend? (regularity)</p>		
<p>What other information is given to parents regarding school performance?</p>		
<p>What percent (%) of parents would you say are literate?</p>		
<p>Do you think parents understand the information that is provided to them about their child's progress?</p>		

Parent Data Collection Tool

DELEGATION:

1. Parent Expectations

Which grade does your child go to?		
Why did you choose this school?	Is there a focus on high-stakes exams, pass results?	
What are your main expectations from the school?		
Which expectations are currently not being met by the school?	Check for: whether private schools are an aspiration and dig into the reasons for it	
What improvements do you want to see in the school?		
What is good quality teaching for you?	Ask if not covered already	
Are you satisfied with the quality of school teachers and school leaders in your child's school?	Ask if not covered already	

2. Visits to school

How often do you visit the school and for what reasons?		
Who do you meet or who can you approach for any difficulties?		
What do you usually discuss ?		
Example: Any difficulty with the school in the past?	Check for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Who did they approach?,- What was the reaction?- Was it resolved?	

3. SMC

Is there an SMC in the school?	- If yes, are you a part of it? - If no, do you think there should be a functional SMC for parents to voice their concerns? Check for: Is there mistrust in the system for giving discretion to parents?	
How are SMCs formed?	Do you think there should be changes in the composition of the SMCs? What changes?	
Examples of decisions that have been taken by SMCs in the past?	What is the involvement of parents?	
Can you give examples of instances when the community came together to raise their voice related to school education?		
What voices were powerful in the situation? Why?		
Whose voice is not heard ?/Who shows reluctance in participation and why?		

NGO Data Collection Tool

A. COMPACT SECTION:

1. DELEGATION & INFORMATION:

1. High-Level Targets & How Is Information Structured?

What are the priority areas in education by the state education ministry ?	Probe: - What goals are set for the system (clear, measurable, achievable goals for progress on cohort learning at early, middle, and late stages)? - What would the executive authority need to see the education authority deliver to consider it successful ?	
What are the key indicators that determine the performance of the education department?	Probe: What would the executive authority need to see the education authority deliver to consider it successful ?	
Based on what info does executive/ fiduciary authorities evaluate the performance of education authorities?	Check for incoherence between information and delegation	
How much of a gap is there between articulated and actual goals?	Check for incoherence within management	

2. How Does The System Determine Education Is Of Sufficient "Quality"?

What features define "quality" education ? What main/minimum features must be met for the system to be confident that education is of sufficient quality ?	Probe: - How do you define quality of education? - What comes from the top as a definition of quality education? How similar/different are these? - How is quality of education understood at lower levels of the system?	
What is the system's view of results of independent learning assessments such as ASER ?	Check: Does the system consider these as an indicator of quality education? In what light?	
What is the system's view of results of centrally conducted sample surveys , such as NAS ?		

2. FINANCE

1. How is finance for education structured?

What is your view of how education is financed in the state?		
What are the components of the education budget ?	Have there been any changes in the funding patterns in the last five years ? Examples?	
What factors are considered while identifying activities for funding ?	- Are effects on learning a focus while deciding on allocations? If not, what is considered? - Access? - How are decisions on approval/rejection of allocations made? - are these related to learning info?	

2. Discretion and Account

Is there any provision (on paper) for making financing decisions (provision for budgets) at the following levels? : - District - Block - Cluster - School	Why or why not? Nudge on: - District Annual Plan - School Development Plan If yes, over what all activities they have discretion to manage and spend funds for? Check if innovation for learning is supported	
What are the timelines for sanctioning various grants ?	Are all grants sanctioned at the same time? - If not, why? Any delays?	
If, yes, how do delays affect the functioning of school or quality of learning?	Illustrate with examples	
What are the major gap areas in financing in the system?	What recommendations do you have to improve the process?	

B. MANAGEMENT SECTION:

1. DELEGATION

Which department do you work with? What are their main targets?	Check for: What are the goals/targets received by them in relation to - <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Enrollment- Dropouts- Exam scores- Mentoring or Training teachers- Learning outcomes	
How do they break these targets down the chain? <ul style="list-style-type: none">- District- Block- Cluster- School	Check for: How are they communicated? Examples - circulars? verbal?	
Which functions/responsibilities does the system prioritize the most?	Priority Tasks? Admin vs Academic	
What gap areas have you identified with respect to the priorities of the system?	If priority is not on academic (or is more on administrative), what do you recommend to the system to align to academic?	
What curriculum do teachers teach in the classroom? What is done differently in the education reform programme? How does the curriculum/syllabus/the education reform programme align with Learning Outcomes?	Check for: Their perception on alignment between content of the education reform programme, LOs and syllabus. Need to validate perceptions across all levels	
What kind of flexibility is given to teachers in the classroom?	Check for the flexibility teachers are given	
Secondary classes are more important than primary classes. Is this statement true for the system - with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">-resources-support-financing-monitoring	Check for focus on foundational learning. Probe for real/on-ground scenario	

<p>What are the major gaps areas wrt to the above in the system? What are your recommendations on this front?</p>		
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2. MOTIVATION:

1. Extrinsic motivators/ Career Advancement & Job Security + Intrinsic Motivators/Teacher Professional status

<p>What according to you drives the teachers to perform their jobs well?</p>	<p>What factors motivate/demotivate them?</p>	
<p>Define quality teachers</p>	<p>What according to you are the key parameters for teachers to be considered competent in their profession? Probe: - What is it according to you? - What is the system's understanding of it?</p> <p>What is the overall quality of teachers and teaching in the state?</p>	
<p>What percent (%) of teachers meet these parameters? Do teachers understand what's expected of them?</p>		
<p>What are the major gap areas wrt to teacher motivation in the system?</p>		
<p>What recommendations do you have for retaining and motivating good teaching? Or to address the gaps?</p>		

3. SUPPORT:

1. Teacher Training and Instructional Materials

What is the quality of teacher training in the state?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- What is the design of training? - Hands - on practice- What is the frequency of in-service training every year?- Who provides the training? Cascade model or not?	
What kind of instructional materials or TLM are provided to schools?		
How is the utilization or impact (benefits) of the materials assessed ?		
What are the major gap areas in the system wrt: -Teacher Training -TLM -Exams		
Do you have any recommendations to improve them?		

4. INFORMATION

1. Review Meeting + Accounts vs Accounting

<p>What meetings (review) happen at the state level for the following, and how frequently?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District ● Block ● Clusters ● Teachers 	<p>Probe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have you participated in any? ● What gets discussed in these meetings? ● What are the agenda items? ● What decisions get taken and based on what data? Examples 	
<p>- What kinds of inspection school visits take place? What is the purpose of visits in schools?</p>	<p>Probe:</p> <p>a) focus on learning oriented info/teaching practices</p> <p>b) teachers given thick feedback related to teaching practices</p>	
<p>What are the major areas of gaps wrt to the above in the system? What are some recommendations to address the gaps?</p>		

2. Exam Purpose and Design

<p>What type of assessments are conducted in an academic year? What purpose do these serve for the system?</p>	<p>When are these conducted - fixed frequency? How do results from school based exams and other assessments feed back into the system to improve performance of students/learning outcomes? At what level?</p>	
<p>Why? - <i>purpose of each</i> How is data from results used?</p>	<p>SA: check learning, FA: inform classroom practice, Baseline: programmatic intervention, NAS: health check; Spot checks-what decisions feeding into - mentoring, training, programmatic interventions - action plans Check for: exams designed to check for understanding and application - what rubric followed?</p>	

Is data from exams reliable?		
Is there pressure to drive good results ? Have you heard of cheating instances?		

C. VOICE & CHOICE

1. Parent Expectations

What are parents' main expectations from the school?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learning 2. Test Scores 3. Infrastructure, TB, MDML 4. Low fees 5. Better teaching/Individualized attention 	
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2. Parent Visits

What is the extent of parents' involvement in their child's school?	<p>Examples of activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PTM - how frequently, how is child's progress discussed, % of parents who regularly attend - what's included in the report card? - if involvement is low, delve into reasons for why it is low 	
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3. SMC

What is the extent of involvement of SMC in management of schools?	Percentage (%) of schools with functional SMCs?	
How are SMCs formed?		
Examples of decisions that have been taken by SMCs in the past?	What is the involvement of parents?	
Are they involved in budgeting ? How do parents participate in the schools' financial decision making?	If not, should they be involved in the budgeting process? Why or why not?	

Do schools prepare SDP and what are its components?	Are school budgets developed and reviewed by parents?	
Can you give examples of instances when the community came together to raise a voice related to school education?	If yes, - What voices were powerful in the situation? Why? - Whose voice is not heard?/Who shows reluctance in participation and why? If no, delve into reasons	
What are the major gap areas wrt to parent involvement in the system? What are some recommendations to address the gaps?		

FINANCE:

1. SMC: Discretion in decision making

Are SMCs involved in budgeting ? How?	If not, should they be involved in the budgeting process? Why or why not?	
How do you participate in the school's financial decision-making?	Are you a part of an SMC? What are your roles as part of the SMC?	

What information is shared with you?	If you are not part of an SMC, how do you participate in school's decisions?	
Are you aware of an SDP and its components?		
Are school budgets developed and reviewed with you?	If not, how do you raise your concerns?	
Applicable only if the answer to above is YES: How do you decide which activity to spend on?	What information is used to inform financing decisions?	

2. Sources of funding/Funding patterns

Do schools raise funds from the community ?	If yes, for what all activities as per your observation?	
Who are usually the funders ?		
Do you also participate in funding your child's school ?	If yes, then why?	
Do you send your child to tuition ?	If yes, then why?	
On an average, how much do you spend on tuition ?		

INFORMATION:

1. Information in PTMs

Can you tell us about your child's performance in school? How is your child performing in different subjects?		
How do you receive this information about your child's learning?	PTMs / day-to-day conversations	
How frequent are PTMs? What is discussed?	What information is shared (Learning and otherwise)?	

Do You / Do all parents attend ? (regularity)	What parents aren't able to attend? Why not?	
What is included in the report card ?	Possible other information: Health Socio-emotional Discipline	
How do you use the information?		

2. Opinions on Exams

Do you think exam scores are a good measure of understanding whether your child is really learning? Why or why not?	Check for: Are you aware of the term learning outcomes? (In percentage terms)	
Do you trust the exam/assessment scores? Why/Why not?		
Do you think cheating in exams/assessments is prevalent in the system?		
Primary classes are as important as secondary classes. Do you think this statement is true? Why or why not?		

3. School's performance

What other information do you get regarding school performance ?		
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What dreams do you have for your child?



Example materials from the stakeholder workshops and interviews

Data collection instruments

by the **EPRC** team from their
diagnostic pilot in **Uganda**

President, MoFPED, Parliament (education committee), Donors

1. What would the (President, Parliament, Donors, MoFPED) need to see the ministry of education deliver to consider it to be successful? (If possible, probe what is the top most priority according to them?)
2. What information is received by the executive or fiduciary authorities the performance of education authorities? Who is this information shared with (i.e. which offices? What information about performance is produced by education authorities to report on their performance? If the ministry of education produces reports on performance what do they contain (on learning, on utilization of funds, on procurement, on access and attainment)?
3. The main mandate of the MoES is to provide "quality education", which one of the following do you consider to be the main indicator for quality education in Uganda? [a. student performance in completion exams e.g., PLE, UCE, etc.; b. teaching practices/methods; c. financial management d. enrolment and transition rates e. others specify]
4. Which of the following do you mainly look at to judge school performance/judge the performance of the ministry of education? [a. student performance in completion exams e.g. PLE, UCE, etc; b. teaching practices/methods; c. financial management d. dropout rates e. Number of students in the school f. school infrastructure g. teacher absenteeism h. Others specify]

Ministry of Education and Sports(MoES)

1. What is your understanding of your obligations from the President, parliament, donors? (Probe: If they sometimes feel like expectations from the different principals are conflicting? What do they perceive as the most important obligation?)
2. As a ministry your role is to provide quality Education, how do you define quality Education?
3. What would success look like for the ministry of education?
4. What information is received by the executive or fiduciary authorities the performance of education authorities? Who is this information shared with (i.e. which offices? What information about performance is produced by education authorities to report on their performance? If the ministry of education produces reports on performance, what do they contain (on learning, on utilization of funds, on procurement, on access and attainment)?

Instructional materials unit (MoES)

1. Describe and evaluate the mechanism of providing learning materials (textbooks, teaching guides) to schools? (Probe: accessibility, quality, quantity, ability to modify: For what reasons would you consider modifying the availed instructional material?)
2. Did/Do you give training on how to use the instructional materials. How do you organize training on how to use the instructional materials? (Probe: how they group teachers? Who gives the training? Where do they usually do the training from?)
3. Is the training material aligned with;
 - a) Examinations,
 - b) Curriculum,
 - c) Student's learning levels (Are they appropriately challenging i.e., the right level for the students, interactive, visually appealing, provide variety/choice, use clear language, easy to implement?)
4. How do you decides/chooses the textbooks, teacher guides, assessment materials for schools to use? Do you schools/teachers have a say in these decisions?

MoES

1. What does the MoES require from NCDC in terms of curriculum design?
2. What does the MoES require from UNEB in terms of national student examinations?
3. What does the MoES require from ESC in terms of teacher training and recruitment?
4. What does the MoES require from schools in terms of learning?
5. What type of information do you collect from schools for the EMIS?
6. For what purposes do you use the information in the EMIS?
7. What criteria do you use to evaluate performance of the different regions/schools?
8. What criteria is followed to apportion resources to schools/different regions? (What criteria is used to advise financing decisions for schools?)
9. What is the level of involvement of local governments and schools in the budget allocation process?
10. Do you give school director/management the authority to allocate and manage received funds/operational budget?

NCDC

1. What are your priorities for the schools regarding covering the curriculum? (Probe: if it is completion, focus on students mastering the content)
2. Do you deem that the curriculum meets the needs of students at different levels? (Is it appropriately challenging i.e., the right level for the students, interactive, visually appealing, provide variety/choice, use clear language, easy to implement?) (Probe for reasons for the given response)
3. How easy is it for schools to access training material (textbooks, teaching guides) required to deliver the curriculum? (What process is followed for schools to acquire the required material?)
4. Are the training materials provided of sufficient quantity i.e. Is the material sufficient for the number of schools (or teachers) in the region?
5. Is the training material editable or easy to modify? (Probe: If the schools/teachers have the autonomy to edit the training material)
6. For what reasons would you allow modifying the availed instructional material?
7. How do you organize training on how to use the instructional materials? (Probe: how they group teachers? Who gives the training? Where do they usually do the training from?)
8. Do you deem that the training materials are of the required quality to meet the needs of pupils at different levels? (Are they appropriately challenging i.e., the right level for the students, interactive, visually appealing, provide variety/choice, use clear language, easy to implement?)
9. Is the training material aligned with examinations and curriculum?
10. How do you decide/choose the textbooks, teacher guides, assessment materials for schools to use? Do you schools/teachers have a say in these decisions?

ESC

1. Which of the following are taken into account during the recruitment process of new teachers? (Do these vary by subject taught, level i.e., lower or upper primary)
 - a) Completed required coursework
 - b) Achieved a specific educational qualification
 - c) Graduated from any tertiary education degree program
 - d) Graduated from a tertiary degree program specifically designed to prepare teachers
 - e) Passed a subject content knowledge written test
 - f) Passed an interview-stage assessment
 - g) Had a minimum amount of practical professional experience
 - h) Passed an assessment conducted by a supervisor based on the practical professional experience
 - i) The conduct during mockup class
2. What criteria/factors are used to determine deployment/transfer of a teacher to another school?
3. What criteria do you follow when setting salaries/compensation packages for teachers?

UNEB

1. What factors do you take into consideration when designing PLE?
2. After from selection purposes, what else do you use the national primary leaving examination results for? (Just broadly ask it as purpose)

DEOs, Inspectors, District Service commission, Centre Coordinating Tutors (CCTs)

Delegation

1. In your respective mandate, what do you aim at achieving in terms of education indicators? Which of these is the top most priority?
2. In your view, do you think the different curricula (Thematic, transition, Upper and abridged) are appropriate for the learning levels of students? What is the top most target regarding curriculum delivery between student learning and curriculum completion?
3. What is your most important responsibility regarding teaching. Is it the number of teachers and their qualifications or teaching methods?

Information

4. What is the most critical information that you focus on during school inspection?
5. What are the criteria used to evaluate school leadership and teacher performance? Which of the mentioned criteria is the top most priority?
6. Standardized tests i.e., mid and end of term exams. What is the main purpose of these tests/What do these exams test (measure)? In your view, are the exams aligned to the curriculum?
7. What changes do schools make using the standardized student assessment results?

Finance

8. Describe the process of central budget allocation to schools in your region. What criteria are explicitly used to make financing decisions for the schools in your region, how do you decide who gets how much?
9. What is the level of involvement of your office/local government in the budgeting process (formulation and approval)?
10. Does the school director/management have authority to allocate and manage received funds/operational budget?
11. Which criteria is followed in determining;
 - a. Teacher remuneration (salaries, allowances, overtime)?
 - b. Financing for school inputs?

Support

12. Describe and evaluate the mechanism of providing learning/training materials(textbooks, teaching guides) to schools? (Probe: accessibility, quality, quantity, ability to modify: For what reasons would you consider

modifying the available instructional material? Did all schools/all teachers in your region receive training on how to use the instructional materials?

13. Is the learning material aligned with;
 - a. Examinations (Why or why not),
 - b. Curriculum(Why or why not),
 - c. Student learning levels(Why or why not)?
14. Do you organize/facilitate in-service teacher training programs for schools in this region? How regular are these? What was the primary focus of the most recent training program?. Is the in-service teacher training conducted for all teachers or just for certain teachers? What criteria do you use to design and organize in-service teacher training programs?
15. Are the pre-service qualifications required the same for all teachers at all levels?

Motivation

16. What criteria is considered during the recruitment process of new teachers?
17. What criteria/factors are used to determine deployment/transfer of a teacher to another school? If possible, request them to rank according to the most important.

School leaders (Directors (especially private schools), Headteachers, Deputy headteacher, DOS)

Management relationship:

Delegation

1. In your respective mandate, what do you aim at achieving in terms of education indicators by (MoES, NCDC, UNEB)? Which of these is the topmost priority?
2. In your view, do you think the different curricula (Thematic, transition, Upper and abridged) are appropriate for the learning levels of students? What is the topmost target regarding curriculum delivery between student learning and curriculum completion?
3. Do you have the freedom/discretion to choose mode of instruction? (Probe: Can teachers choose the pedagogical techniques that best suit their students' needs in conjunction with systemwide learning goals/core curricular expectations?)

Information

4. What is the most critical information that inspectors focus on during school inspection? Does your school use feedback from school supervision visits to make adjustments? [Yes, No]. What adjustments are usually made basing on the report?
5. What are the criteria used to evaluate school leadership and teacher performance? Which of the mentioned criteria is the topmost priority?
6. Standardized tests i.e., mid and end of term exams. What is the main purpose of these tests/What do these exams test (measure)? In your view, are the exams aligned to the curriculum?
7. What adjustments do schools make using the standardized student assessment results?

Finance

8. What is the level of involvement of your office in the central budget allocation to schools (formulation and approval)? Does the central budget allocation allow you to re-allocate funds among different items? Under what circumstances/conditions are you allowed to re-allocate funds across items?
9. Which criteria is followed in determining;
 - a. Teacher remuneration (salaries, allowances, overtime)?
 - b. Financing for school inputs?

Support

10. Describe and evaluate the mechanism of providing learning materials (textbooks, teaching guides) to schools? (Probe: accessibility, quality, quantity, ability to modify: For what reasons would you consider modifying the available instructional material? Did all your staff members receive training on how to use the instructional materials?
11. Is the training material aligned with;
 - i. Examinations (Why or why not),
 - ii. Curriculum (Why or why not),
 - iii. Student's learning levels (Why or why not)?
12. Do you organize/facilitate in-service teacher training programs for teachers in your schools? How regular are these? What criteria do you use to design and organize in-service teacher training programs?
13. Did your training to become a teacher include teaching practice? (Probe: How long did this practice last? Do you feel that it was relevant (time spent, timing, content) to prepare you for your teaching. Why or why not)?
14. How often have you supervised your teaching staff since the start of the school year? What is your focus during the supervision?

Motivation

15. What criteria are considered during the recruitment process of new teachers?
16. What criteria/factors are used to determine transfer of teachers to another school?

School leaders

Voice and choice relationship:

Delegation

1. What criteria do parents use to evaluate the quality of your school? (Which one is key?)
2. Do parents and communities oversee school governance and management? **(Note to interviewer: Explain difference between governance and management).** Which aspects of governance/management do parents/communities have a say on?
3. Does your school involve representatives (PTAs, SMCs, traditional leaders, community leaders etc.) of parents and communities in school management and governance? Do they represent the voices of a few parents or of the majority?

Information

4. Regarding standardized exams, what information do you provide to the parents/guardians to help them assess whether their children are learning? How often do you provide this information? How trustworthy is this information? (Please explain)
5. Other than termly reports, what other information do you provide to the parents/guardians to help them assess pupil's learning? Do parents understand this information (Why or why not)?
6. Have your school's parents ever used the results to demand accountability from the school? Yes, No. If yes, how do they act on such information?

Finance

7. Do parents have a say in how the schools spend the central budget/fees contributed to the school? If yes, what components of the central budget do they have a say on?
8. In addition to the capitation grant, do parents make any other financial contribution to the school? If yes, what do they mainly finance and do they provide a significant amount?
9. What information do parents use to make financing decisions (paying a certain amount of tuition or non-tuition fees)?

Motivation

10. Does the PTA/SMC/parents participate/have a say in the process of teacher hiring, firing or promotion? How do parents justify their recommendations regarding teacher hiring, firing etc.?

Teachers

Management relationship:

Delegation

1. In your respective mandates, what do you aim at achieving in terms of education indicators set by MoES, NCDC, UNEB? Which of these is the topmost priority?
2. In your view, do you think the different curricula (Thematic, transition, Upper and abridged) are appropriate for the learning levels of students? What is the topmost target regarding curriculum delivery between student learning and curriculum completion?
3. Do you have the freedom/discretion to choose mode of instruction? (Probe: Can teachers choose the pedagogical techniques that best suit their students' needs in conjunction with systemwide learning goals/core curricular expectations?)

Information

4. What is the most critical information that you focus on during school inspection?
5. What are the criteria used to evaluate school leadership and teacher performance? Which of the mentioned criteria is the topmost priority?
6. Standardized tests i.e., mid and end of term exams. What is the main purpose of these tests/What do these exams test (measure)? In your view, are the exams aligned to the curriculum?
7. What changes do schools make using the standardized student assessment results?

Finance

8. Which criteria is followed in determining;
 - a. Teacher remuneration (salaries, allowances, overtime)?
 - b. Financing for school inputs?

Support

9. Describe and evaluate the mechanism of providing learning materials (textbooks, teaching guides) to schools? (Probe: accessibility, quality, quantity, ability to modify: For what reasons would you consider modifying the availed instructional material?
10. Is the training material aligned with (On what basis are you judging that it is aligned or not);
 - i. Examinations,
 - ii. Curriculum,

iii. Student's learning levels?

11. Do you receive in-service teacher training programs in your schools? How regular are these? What criteria are used to design and organize in-service teacher training programs?
12. Did your training to become a teacher include teaching practice? (Probe: How long did this practice last? Do you feel that it was relevant (time spent, timing, content) to prepare you for your teaching. Why or why not)?
13. How often have you been supervised by your head teacher since the start of the school year? What is your focus during the supervision?

Motivation

14. Why did you choose to become a teacher?
15. What criteria are considered during the recruitment process of new teachers?
16. What criteria/factors are used to determine your transfer to another school?

Teachers

Voice and choice relationship

Delegation

1. What criteria do parents use to evaluate the quality of your school? (Which one is key?)
2. Do parents and communities oversee school governance and management? **(Note to interviewer: Explain difference between governance and management).** Which aspects of governance/management do parents/communities have a say on?
3. Does your school involve representatives (PTAs, SMCs, traditional leaders, community leaders etc.) of parents and communities in school management and governance? Do they represent the voices of a few parents or of the majority?

Information

4. Regarding standardized exams, what information do you provide to the parents/guardians to help them assess whether their children are learning? How often do you provide this information? How trustworthy is this information? (Please explain)
5. Other than termly reports, what other information do you provide to the parents/guardians to help them assess pupil's learning? Do parents understand this information (Why or why not)?
6. Have your school's parents ever used the results to demand accountability from the school? Yes, No. If yes, how do they act on such information?

Finance

7. Do parents have a say in how the schools spend the central budget/fees contributed to the school? If yes, what components of the central budget do they have a say on?
8. Does the accountability voice of parents and other stakeholders in the school increase with their private financial contributions to the school? (As a way to follow up their funds contributed)
9. What information do parents use to make financing decisions (paying a certain amount of tuition or non-tuition fees)?

Motivation

10. Does the PTA/SMC/parents participate/have a say in the process of teacher hiring, firing or promotion? How do parents justify their recommendations regarding teacher hiring, firing etc? How often are such recommendations implemented?

Parents/community leaders, community representatives/CSOs

Delegation

1. What would the parents/communities/community leaders need to see the schools deliver to consider it to be successful? (Which one is key?)
2. Do parents and communities oversee school governance and management? **(Note to interviewer: Explain difference between governance and management).** Probe: Why/why not?) Which aspects of governance/management do parents/communities have a say on?

Information

3. Regarding standardized exams, what information do schools provide to the parents/guardians to help them assess whether their children are learning? How often do you receive this information? How trustworthy is this information? (Please explain)
4. Other than termly reports, what other information do you receive from the schools to help you assess pupil's learning? Do parents understand this information (Why or why not)?
5. Have you ever used the results to demand accountability from the school? Yes, No. If yes, how do you act on such information?

Finance

6. Do you parents have a say in how the schools spend the central budget/fees contributed to the school? If yes, what components of the central budget do you have a say on?
7. Do you (parents, community leaders, SMC, PTA) receive financial audit reports from the schools? Can you (parents, community leaders, SMC, PTA) request a financial audit of the SBG or the school's operating budget?
8. Do you (parents) ever withhold money for certain reasons related to lack of accountability of finances by schools?
9. What information do you parents use to make financing decisions (paying a certain amount of tuition or non-tuition fees)?

Motivation

10. Does the PTA/SMC/parents make recommendations on teacher hiring, firing or promotion? How often are such recommendations implemented? (Request for description of a recent scenario)
11. On what criteria do you evaluate the school leadership/teachers? (Probe: How do you determine that the leadership/teachers at the school that your

child goes to are good)? Can a shortfall experienced on the above cause you to find another school for your child?

12. Do you perceive that all your inputs into the school are addressed uniformly or are certain sects of parents favored more than other? (Probe: If certain parents are favored, what factors make them more favorable?)
13. Do you (parents and other community leaders) have one common voice to hold schools accountable or it is done individually by a few prominent and concerned parties?

3

Example materials from the stakeholder workshops and interviews

Survey instrument and methods note by the **Global School Leaders** team from their diagnostic pilots in **GSL partner countries**

A Systems Approach to Improve Support for School Leaders to Prioritise Teaching and Learning

Methods Note

Minahil Asim, Gautam Anand, Dewi Susanti, Tien Sing Tay

Introduction

The RISE Systems Framework is a useful tool to characterise key actors and their interactions in the education system (Pritchett, 2015; Spivak, 2021). The underlying theoretical framework is the principal-agent relationships, where the principal engages the agent to accomplish a task and holds them accountable for it. The framework identifies four key relationships in an education system: politics, compact, management, and voice and choice; and five design elements that can be used to describe these relationships: delegation, finance, information, support, and motivation (described in the table below). The underlying principle is that if the relationships of accountability are aligned around a learning objective across the design elements, the system is effective in delivering improvements in learning (Crouch, 2020).

Five design elements of each relationship of accountability (Principal (P) to Agent (A))	Principal - Agent Relationships			
	Politics: Citizens and the highest authorities of the state	Compact: Highest authority of the State to Education authority	Management: Education authorities and schools, school leaders, and teachers	Voice & Choice: parents/children and schools/school leaders/ teachers
Delegation: what principal wants agent to do.				
Finance: resources principal allocates to agent.				
Support: preparation and assistance that principal provides to agent.				
Information: how principal assesses agent's performance				
Motivation: How principal motivates agent.				

Performance of the system is the result of the feedback loops and relationships between the actors

Since the work of Global School Leaders (GSL) focuses on strengthening the capacity of school leaders to improve teaching and learning outcomes, for our diagnostics project in our partner countries, we drew from the RISE framework with two overarching goals: (1) to identify key actors in the education systems that interact with school leaders and map the alignments and incoherencies in the education systems that influence school leaders' decision-making; and (2) to generate theory and evidence on the conditions that are likely to improve system performance. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we were able to do neither in full.

However, the process of adapting the RISE Systems Framework to a country's context and developing research instruments (workshop questions and a school leader survey) offered interesting insights into the educational landscape in a particular country. We were also able to critically reflect on the framework and other management and accountability focused research and analyze the benefits and the limitations of using the framework to understand education systems.

Adaptation of the Framework for the Diagnostic

After conducting a comprehensive literature review of school leadership in a country, we narrowed our diagnostics by focusing on the management relationship between education authorities at different levels (district, state, and national as principals) and the school leaders (as agents) across the elements of delegation, information, finance, motivation, and support. This is because of a limited amount of documents which outline the exact implementation of a reform, which pushed for administrative decentralization, higher school autonomy, and development of instructional and distributed leadership to school principals. Given that our literature review revealed that the country context was one which functioned in a centralised and hierarchical system, it seemed appropriate to explore the principal-agent relationships between school leaders and the different education authorities that could explain the de facto and de jure realities.

In a centralized education system, it seems also appropriate to study the compact relationship between the highest executive and fiduciary authorities (principal), such as the Ministry of Finance that sets the budget, and the education authorities (agent), such as the Ministry of Education was key to understanding the decision-making processes of front-line providers at the school-level. Hence, we expanded our analytical frame to include the compact relationship in our system diagnostic. However, we limited the design elements to focus only on delegation and finance, which are more directly relevant for the school leaders.

Mapping the literature review on to the RISE framework helped us achieve two objectives. First, we were able to identify stakeholder groups, get their feedback on our research design, identify actors we wanted to conduct workshops with and consequently, develop workshop questionnaires. We used five themes that emerged from our literature review (school leader motivation and incentives, the hierarchical administrative structure of the ministry, issues of finance, capacity development, and accountability and monitoring in the system) to conduct stakeholder meetings and develop workshop questions. Second, we used the themes to look at existing empirical studies that used leadership and management surveys in education to develop our survey instrument. The survey is a unique contribution in the adaptation of the RISE framework.

Below is a summary of instruments that we reviewed and that are useful in understanding management and leadership practices of educational actors. Broadly, we found that there was an overlap between the constructs among the surveys i.e., they were not mutually exclusive and often elided elements that were related to management routines, organizational behavior and practices, and individual behaviors and routines. To that effect, there was a strong overlap between the constructs in these surveys and the RISE diagnostic framework.

Management

- Development - World Management Survey (D-WMS): Bloom et al. (2015) and Lemos and Scur (2016) measure school-level practices in terms of management (operations, monitoring, target setting, and people management); leadership and accountability (leadership vision and strategy, clearly defined accountability for school leaders); and autonomy (personnel autonomy, budgetary autonomy, academic content autonomy).
- Education Policy Dashboard includes constructs such as: national learning goals (which includes, targeting, monitoring, incentives, community engagement); accountability and mandates (which includes, coherence, transparency, accountability and mandates of officials); quality of bureaucracy (which includes, knowledge, skills, work environment, merit, motivation); impartial decision-making (which include questions related to personnel, policy, implementation, and unions); and human resources.

School Climate and Working Conditions

- The PISA (2018) includes school- and system-level factors (as reported by the principal): type of school (public/private), number of programmes, class size, educational resources (e.g. ICT, library), school responsibility for assessment and curriculum and for resource allocation, extra-curricular activities available, age of school entry, grade repetition, school admittance/grouping/transfer policies,

assessment practices/purposes, use of achievement data, school accountability, methods for monitoring teachers, teacher and student behaviour, parent involvement and expectations, leadership, school climate. The module on school climate includes questions on safety, teaching and learning (including measures of academic support and feedback teachers receive), school community (such as, student-teacher relationships) and the institutional environment.

- The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) asks teachers and school leaders about working conditions and learning environments by probing on issues such as the professional development they have received; their teaching beliefs and practices; the review of teachers' work and the feedback and recognition they receive about their work; and various other school leadership, management, and workplace issues.

Leadership and Organization Learning

- Bryk et al. (2010) measure school leadership, parent-community ties, professional capacity, student-centered learning climate, instructional guidance and relational trust.
- Leithwood (2013) provide 9 characteristics of effective districts including a broadly shared mission, vision, and goals; coherent instructional guidance; deliberate and consistent use of multiple sources of evidence to inform decisions; learning oriented organizational improvement processes; professional development of members; alignment of budgets, personnel policies/procedures and uses of time with district mission, vision, and goals; a comprehensive approach to professional leadership development; a policy-oriented district of trustees; and a productive working relationship with staff and stakeholders.
- Leithwood (2010, 2019) and Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) link district outcomes with school-level outcomes which include constructs such as teacher commitment and trust, and collaborative culture and structures.

To develop our survey, we borrowed from this literature, and under each of the design elements of the RISE framework, adapted questions from these surveys for our context. We iterated the survey questions based on findings from the workshops with stakeholders that included school leaders and Ministry of Education staff to reflect the contextual realities of the system.

Analysis

Through the comprehensive review of literature on school leadership in a country and a review of instruments that are used to capture management and leadership practices in different contexts, we learnt three important lessons.

First, the RISE framework focuses on individual-level processes i.e., behaviors of the principals and the agents to influence system-level reform. This is because the disciplinary orientation of the accountability framework is economics and public policy, and the long- and short- route to accountability described in the World Development Report 2004 (World Bank, 2003) has historically shaped education reforms in low-and middle-income countries. Reviewing evidence from OECD countries and other disciplines, such as educational leadership and administration and sociology, suggests that actors are embedded within organizations and understanding organizational culture, through individual networks, organic support systems, or development of trust and productive working conditions seem equally important to understand school leadership development, and education systems in general. We found the focus on the individual in the RISE framework limiting.

Second, our survey is a novel methodological contribution to unpacking the RISE framework. However, while we were excited about the prospect of conducting a survey and unpacking both individual and organizational level constraints for school leaders through it, we questioned whether a survey of only school leaders was sufficient for a systems diagnostic. Given that we are measuring multiple relationships, between schools and districts, schools and the state, and schools and citizens, it is limiting to only focus on a survey of one set of actors. Methodologically, it makes sense that other actors in the education hierarchy are also surveyed to triangulate and verify claims of one set of actors. This is an expensive undertaking, but Leaver et al., (2022) in their work on understanding delivery approaches in Ghana have done an interesting job of mapping networks through surveys between districts, district staff, and schools to understand priorities, processes, and task completion at all levels. The work is complemented with deep qualitative work in selected districts to understand constraints to service delivery. It seems to us that to map system coherence and system alignment, one methodological orientation may be insufficient, and we will have to think of a combination of network analysis, quantitative/quasi-experimental research, and ethnographic research.

Finally, our experience in this project further emphasises the need to have institutional support from the government. In order to ensure that stakeholders can participate and the data collected can be used to inform policies and education reforms, it is paramount to adhere to the policies in place, engage in a collaborative manner with the government at various levels, and time the study for policy relevance.

Conclusion

Our study intended to understand the education system of a country using the RISE diagnostic framework. Our research design included multiple data collection instruments to unpack the alignments and misalignments within the education bureaucracy. While we were unable to implement our study in full, this note offers important insights and lessons we learnt through the process, including the limitations of the RISE framework in conceptualizing actors within the education hierarchy, the methodological rigor required to do system-level analysis, and the politics of education reform and evidence-based analysis in low- and middle income countries.

A Systems Approach to Improve Support for School Leaders to Prioritise Teaching and Learning

Survey for School Leaders

Gautam Anand, Minahil Asim, Dewi Susanti, Tien Sing Tay

If you draw on this template survey for your own study, please cite this as: "Anand, G., Asim, M., Susanti, D., and Tay, T.S. (2023). A Systems Approach to Improve Support for School Leaders to Prioritise Teaching and Learning. Accessed on [insert date] from [this](#) public document."

Introduction

The Global School Leaders (GSL) utilises the RISE Systems Framework to develop a comprehensive understanding of the education systems within which school leaders operate and whether and how the education systems can better harness their abilities and effectiveness in supporting teaching and learning.

In addition to conducting consultative workshops with key stakeholders, the GSL team saw the need to complement them with a survey of school leaders to better capture the extent of discrepancies between the desk review and understanding of the school leaders on de jure policies and de facto of what can be implemented by them. In addition, it would have been difficult to capture the variations from different locations through consultative workshops alone.

We first used the five elements of the RISE Systems Framework to conduct our literature review (school leader motivation and incentives, the hierarchical administrative structure of the ministry, issues of finance, capacity development, and accountability and monitoring in the system). After that, we conducted stakeholder meetings and developed the workshop questions. We then used the themes to look at existing empirical studies that used leadership and management surveys in education (especially TALIS and PISA) to develop our survey instrument. Once we completed the workshops, we revised our survey based on our initial findings and also conducted an additional focus group with school leaders to ensure the relevance and framing of the survey.

Below is a summary of instruments that we reviewed in understanding management and leadership practices of educational actors. Broadly, we found that there was an overlap between the constructs among the surveys i.e., they were not mutually exclusive and often elided elements that were related to management routines, organisational behaviour and practices, and individual behaviours and routines. To that effect, there was a strong overlap between the constructs in these surveys and the RISE Systems Framework.

Management

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Survey for School Leaders

Part 1 - Participants' Demographics

1. Are you male or female?
 - Male
 - Female
2. What is your age? (Numeric answer in years)
3. What is your ethnicity/race?
 - Context-specific ethnicity/race options
 - If others, please specify:_____
4. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?
 - Diploma
 - Undergraduate Degree
 - Masters
 - PhD
5. How many years of experience do you have as a teacher? (Numeric answer in years)
6. [If Applicable] What is your role in your current school?
 - Principal
 - Deputy Principal or equivalent
 - Head of Department or equivalent
7. How many years of experience do you have as a school leader? (Head of Department and above) (Numeric answer in years)
8. [If Applicable] Based on [context-specific teacher appraisal instrument], what was your [self assessment/formally assessed] score for leadership? (Numeric Answer)
9. [If Applicable] Based on [context-specific teacher appraisal instrument], what was your [self assessment/formally assessed] score for organisational management? (Numeric Answer)

Part 2 - School Information

10. What state is your current school in?
- Context-specific location options
11. In which area is your school located?
- Urban
 - Suburban
 - Rural
12. Which category does your school fall under?
- a. Context-specific school type options (For example; primary, secondary, higher secondary)
17. [If Applicable] Is your school involved under the following programs?
Please choose all that apply.
- a. Context-specific school programme options (Options could include specific school-level programs being implemented by the local/state/national government)
18. [If Applicable] What was your school's score/rating in [context specific school appraisal instrument]?
- a. Context-specific school performance result
19. [If Applicable] From the last [Context-specific national summative assessment], what is the average passing rate of your school?
(Numeric Answer)
20. What is the percentage of students in your school which belong to the [Context-specific socio-economic category]?
(Numeric Answer)

Part 3 - Administrative Structure

21. Which of the following 3 goals best describes your school's vision (This can be given by your district/ state/ national aspiration.)
- a. Improving student enrollment
 - b. improving student attendance
 - c. Improving student social emotional learning
 - d. Improving student critical thinking
 - e. improving student continuation to higher levels of schooling
 - f. improving student academic achievement,
 - g. Improving student literacy and numeracy
 - h. improving participation in school competitions
 - i. Reducing student dropout

j. Others, please specify:_____

22. Based on your school context (condition, teachers, students), what do you think should be the teaching and learning priorities for your school?

Please choose the 3 main priorities.

- a. Improving student enrollment
- b. improving student attendance
- c. Improving student social emotional learning
- d. Improving student critical thinking
- e. improving student continuation to higher levels of schooling
- f. improving student academic achievement,
- g. Improving student literacy and numeracy
- h. improving participation in school competitions
- i. Reducing student dropout
- j. Others, please specify:_____

23. On average throughout the school year, what percentage of time in your role as a principal do you spend on the following tasks in this school?¹

Role	Percentage of Time (%)
Admin (Including following regulations, preparing reports, responding to requests from district, regional, state, or national education officials)	
Co-curricular activities (School level and beyond the school)	
Curriculum and teaching-related tasks and meetings (Including developing curriculum, preparing timetables and class composition, teaching, classroom observations, student evaluation, mentoring teachers, teacher professional development)	
Financial management (include school budget, financial management, fundraising, operational expenses, school improvement expenditure, books and learning materials, etc.)	
Building relationships with students outside of the classroom (examples include talking to students while patrolling the school, visiting their houses, scheduling conversations with students to better understand their situation)	

¹ Adapted from Q21 of TALIS 2018, <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/TALIS-2018-MS-Principal-Questionnaire-ENG.pdf>

Interactions with the community (PTA, NGO)	
Leadership tasks and meetings (Including strategic planning, leadership and management activities such as developing school improvement plans, managing human resource and personnel issues, problem solving and conflict management.	
Total	100

24. Which are the 3 main tasks should you prioritise your time on?
- a. Admin (Including following regulations, preparing reports, responding to requests from district, regional, state, or national education officials)
 - b. Co-curricular activities (School level and beyond the school)
 - c. Curriculum and teaching-related tasks and meetings (Including developing curriculum, preparing timetables and class composition, teaching, classroom observations, student evaluation, mentoring teachers, teacher professional development)
 - d. Financial management (include school budget, financial management, fundraising, operational expenses, school improvement expenditure, books and learning materials, etc.)
 - e. Building relationships with students outside of the classroom
 - f. Interactions with the community (PTA)
 - g. Leadership tasks and meetings (Including strategic planning, leadership and management activities such as developing school improvement plans, managing human resource and personnel issues, problem solving and conflict management.

25. Likert Scale:

- 1 - Always
- 2 - To a large extent
- 3 - To some extent
- 4 - Never

To what extent do you feel you and your teachers can make decisions on:²

- a. Admin
- b. Leadership tasks and meetings

² Adapted from Q22 of TALIS 2018, <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/TALIS-2018-MS-Principal-Questionnaire-ENG.pdf>

- c. How many hours students should be spending on certain subject per week;
- d. What teaching materials your teachers can use;
- e. How teachers should be teaching the subject
- f. Financial management
- g. Co-curricular Activities
- h. Community Engagement

Part 4 - Accountability and Monitoring

26. In your role as a school leader, what is the main reason that you are collecting data for? (Choose one)
- a. Collects data for ministry requirements only.
 - b. Collects data on teaching (lesson plans, classroom observation, teacher professional development, etc.)
 - c. (Collects data on student learning (attendance, assessment, benchmarking, etc.)
27. In your role as a school leader, which are the top 3 data you collect that is most useful for the school?
- a. Classroom Based Assessment
 - b. Student Profile Database
 - c. Education Management Information System
 - d. Student Behaviour
 - e. Student Co-curricular Database
 - f. Human resource management system
 - g. Teacher Profiles
 - h. Teacher Professional Development Data
 - i. Others, please specify:_____
28. Based on the data submitted in the last 12 months, our school received
- a. Acknowledgement of data received
 - b. Recognition from the ministry (state or district or national) through an award or certificate
 - c. in-kind support
 - d. financial support
 - e. additional supervision based on the challenges identified in the data
 - f. No response
29. In the last 12 months, how often does your school conduct student learning summative assessment?
- a. Not conducted

- b. Once
- c. Once every 6 months
- d. Once every 3 months
- e. Once a month
- f. More than once a month

30. What is the **main** purpose that you and your teachers use the student learning summative assessment results for?

- a. For reporting to the ministry through the district and state
- b. Inform the formative assessment
- c. Inform the next summative assessment
- d. Give feedback to teachers/reflect on their performance in order to improve teaching
- e. Make decisions about teacher retention or promotion
- f. Inform parents about their child's progress

31. Are assessments of students used to inform parents about their child's progress?

- a. Yes
- b. No

32. If yes, how often do you share assessment results with parents?

- a. Once every 6 months
- b. Once every 3 months
- c. Once a month
- d. More than once a month

33. How do you evaluate the performance of your teachers? Please check all that apply.

- a. Last year's teacher review
- b. Review student exam performance
- c. Review accomplishing assigned tasks
- d. Teacher peer review
- e. Observations of lessons by school leaders
- f. Use the data from observation of classes by inspectors and other personnel

34. In the last 12 months, how many percent of your teachers in your school achieve [Context specific teacher appraisal score] in their [Context specific teacher appraisal instrument]?

- a. [Context specific teacher appraisal score ranges]

35. In the last 12 months, how many times has your school been visited by the school supervisor? ([Context specific officials as examples])
- Once every 6 months
 - Once every 3 months
 - Once a month
 - More than once a month
36. In the last 12 months, how many times has your school been visited for classroom observations? ([Context specific officials as examples])
- Once every 6 months
 - Once every 3 months
 - Once a month
 - More than once a month
37. Based on the inspections mentioned in the 2 previous questions, to what extent have appraisals of and/or feedback to principals directly led to the following?³
- Change in salary
 - Opportunity for professional development
 - Career advancement
 - Public recognition
 - Others, please specify:_____

Likert Scale:

- To a great extent
- To a certain extent
- To a small extent
- To no extent

Part 5 - Finance

38. Which of the following apply to the financial management of your school? Please check all that apply.
- Context specific school types which affect financial managements
39. If you had the authority to make budgetary decisions, or given an additional budget, what would you spend it on? Please choose one option.
- Operational expenses e.g. electricity, fuel water bills;

³ Adapted from PISA 2012, https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pdf/MS12_ScQ_USA_final.pdf

- School improvement e.g. renovating, additional desks, boards etc.;
- Capacity building for teachers on teaching and learning;
- Books and learning materials

40. Please rank your school's main source of funding (in cash and in kind) in descending order.

- Capitation grants
- LPS (School Board of Directors)
- Parent Teacher Association,
- External donors and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
- Corporations

Part 6 - Support

41. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I decided to become a school leader because:

- I wanted to have authority to improve the school.
- It was the next logical step in my career advancement.
- I was motivated by other school leaders to join the profession.
- I believed in my talent and ability to lead as a school leader

Likert Scale:

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 - Strongly disagree

42. We would like to know how you generally feel about your job. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?⁴

- I would still choose to become a principal again.
- Going to school every day makes me feel happy.
- I am motivated by what I can do in my school.
- I have challenges in my school but I feel I can overcome these challenges

Likert Scale:

- 1 - To a great extent
- 2 - To a certain extent
- 3 - To a small extent
- 4 - To no extent

⁴ Adapted from Q44 TALIS 2018, <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/TALIS-2018-MS-Principal-Questionnaire-ENG.pdf>

43. Thinking about your job at this school, to what extent are the following sources of stress in your work?⁵
- Responsibility for students' performance
 - Teachers' appraisal,
 - Administrative work
 - Supervision by education officials from the district/state/national level
 - Parents/community concerns,
 - Human resource management
 - Financial Management
 - Others, please specify: _____
44. In the last 12 months, how many days have you received in-service training?
Numeric Answer
45. What is the breakdown of the main content of the training received?
- Leadership (Instructional, Distributed) - _____ days
 - Management (School, Human Resource and Finance) - _____ days
 - Teaching and Learning - _____ days
 - Use of Technology - _____ days
 - Others, please specify: _____ days
46. Have those training prepared you for implementing the shifts of the [Context specific Ministry policy]?
- Yes
 - No
47. [If applicable] Are you being supported by a [Context specific coach for school leaders]?
- Yes
 - No
48. If yes, is your [Context specific coach for school leaders] a former school leader?
- Yes
 - No

⁵ Adapted from TALIS 2018, <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/TALIS-2018-MS-Principal-Questionnaire-ENG.pdf>

49. If yes, how often are you being supported by him/her in the last 12 months?
- Once every 6 months
 - Once every 3 months
 - Once a month
 - More than once a month
 - Once a year
 - Less than once a year
50. If yes, what is the scope of the support you have received from your [Context specific coach for school leaders]?
- a. Admin
 - b. Co-curricular activities
 - c. Curriculum and teaching-related tasks and meetings
 - d. Financial management
 - e. Building relationships with students outside of the classroom
 - f. Interactions with the community
 - g. Leadership tasks and meetings
 - h. Motivation
51. If yes, how would you rate the support received from your [Context specific coach for school leaders]?
- Very helpful
 - Helpful
 - Somewhat helpful
 - Not helpful
52. For each of the areas listed below, please indicate the extent to which you currently need support/professional development in.⁶
- a. Classroom observation
 - b. Instructional leadership
 - c. Teacher feedback
 - d. Analysing data
 - e. Human Resources
 - f. Administrative work
 - g. Financial management
 - h. Technology
 - i. Stress Management/Motivation

Likert Scale:

⁶ Adapted from Q8 TALIS 2018, <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/TALIS-2018-MS-Principal-Questionnaire-ENG.pdf>

- 1 - Strongly need this training
- 2 - Need this training
- 3 - Somewhat need this training
- 4 - Do not need this training

53. Are there any areas not mentioned above in which you need support/professional development in?

Text Answer: _____

54. How strongly do you agree or disagree that the following present barriers to your participation in professional development?⁷

- a. Lack of professional development opportunities
- b. Lack of support from superiors
- c. Lack of time, resources
- d. Health problems
- e. Others, please specify: _____

Likert Scale:

- 1 - Strongly agree
- 2 - Agree
- 3 - Disagree
- 4 - Strongly disagree.

55. In the last 12 months, how often is there a meeting to discuss instructional practices in the school?

- a. Rarely or never
- b. Once a semester/ quarter
- c. Once a month
- d. More than once a month

----- END OF SURVEY -----

⁷ Adapted from Q9 TALIS 2018 <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/TALIS-2018-MS-Principal-Questionnaire-ENG.pdf>

3

Example materials from the stakeholder workshops and interviews

Workshop slide deck (in Spanish) by the **SUMMA** team from their diagnostic pilot in **Ecuador**

Metodología de talleres

1

Talleres según enfoque (sub-elementos a tratar)

Quito: finance and information

Guayaquil and Tena: support, delegation and motivation

Finance	compact	General: how is finance for education structured? Teachers how is financing for teachers structured? Non-teachers: how is finance for other education inputs structured? Discretion: where and to what extent is discretion for finance in education distributed throughout the system?
	management	How teachers are financed How inputs are financed Spider vs. starfish (allocating funds) Accounts vs. accounting
	voice and choice	Strength of voice: Does the local level have some discretion over financing for education? Alignment of voice and choice: What information is used to inform financing decisions?
	Compact	General: how is information for education structured? Quality: How does the system determine that education is of sufficient "quality"? EMIS: What information is included in the system EMIS?
Information	Management	EMIS Exams purpose Exam design (curriculum-exam alignment) Accounts vs. accounting for school leadership and teachers Information use
	voice and choice	Alignment of voice and choice: Do standardized exams provide regular, reliable, relevant information on learning? Alignment of voice and choice: Beyond standardized exams, do families get other accounts of whether their child is learning?

Support	Management	Internal coherence/quality of instructional materials External coherence between training and other design elements Spider vs. starfish: form of instructional materials and teacher training Accounts vs. accounting: delivery of teacher training
	Compact	High level target: what does the executive set as the goal for the system? Human resources: how does the executive set out human resource goals. De jure / de facto delegation gap: how much of a gap is there between articulated and actual goals?
Delegation	Management	High level targets Alignment of curriculum, exams, and learning level of students Most important responsibilities Spider vs. starfish: local discretion granted to schools/teachers
	Voice and Choice	Alignment of voice and choice: What do parents want? Strength of voice: Does the bureaucracy allow voice a role in governing schools? "Degree of distributed decentralization" Strength of voice: Whose voice? To what degree is there internal community cohesion?
Motivation	M anagement	Teacher professional status / intrinsic motivation Career advancement and job security / Extrinsic motivators
	Voice and choice	Strength of voice: Does the local level have some discretion over teacher career structures? Alignment of voice and choice: What information is used to inform judgments about school leadership / school choice?

2

Detalles de taller

Actividad	Dur	An	Insumos y herramientas	Formatos y herramientas
Saludo y presentaciones de participantes	15'		Grabadora general	Lista de participantes para registro
1. Explicar marco RISE y el proceso de diagnóstico- y ejercicio	30'	9	Impresiones del ejercicio	PPT Plotter del triángulo de relaciones Hojas del ejercicio (tabla para poner X).
Preguntas	10'		Grabadora general, Hojas para notetakers	
2. Trabajo en grupos sobre RELACIONES (subelementos y alignments) (con enfoque en ciudad) 3 grupos	40'	9	Esferos Grabadora por grupo x4 (por si acaso)	Worksheets por relación Anexo 9 Docu de referencia para notetakers (Anexos 4,5 o 6)
Plenaria de exposición grupal (AMPLIAR TIEMPO)	30'	9	Grabadora general, Hojas para notetakers	
Coffee Break	30'		Papelote para resumir lo de worksheets	
3. Trabajo en grupos sobre INCOHERENCIAS (con enfoque en ciudad) 3 grupos	40'	10	Papelotes (x6 - 2 por grupo) Post its de 4 colores diferentes Marcadores	
Plenaria de exposición grupal (AMPLIAR TIEMPO)	30'	10	Grabadora general, Hojas para notetakers	
Conclusiones: resumen de incoherencias y elementos y posibles intervenciones	60'	12	Papelotes (x6 - 2 por grupo) Post its de 4 colores diferentes Marcadores	

3

1. Ejercicio inicial de diagnóstico (10')

Una vez que se explica el marco teórico se invita a los asistentes a completar el siguiente cuadro con una X.

Proyecto Piloto RISE en Ecuador / Aplicando el Pensamiento Sistémico a la Educación
Por favor marcar con una X el recuadro dónde considera que se encuentra alineación del sub elemento respectivo:

Relación	Elemento	Sub-elemento	Alineación					
			Aprendizaje	Saludabilidad	Acceso	Asesoración	Cumplimiento con normas (estándares)	Cumplimiento con otros (objetivos)
Pacto	Financiamiento	General: ¿cómo se estructura la financiación de la educación?						
		Docentes ¿Cómo se estructura la financiación de los docentes?						
	No docentes: ¿cómo se estructura la financiación de otros insumos educativos?							
	Discrecionalidad: ¿dónde y en qué medida se distribuye la discrecionalidad para financiar la educación en todo el sistema?							
Información	General: ¿cómo se estructura la información para la educación?							
	Calidad: ¿cómo determina el sistema que la educación es de suficiente "calidad"?							
	SIGED (Sistema Información y Gestión Educativa): ¿Qué información se incluye en el sistema SIGED?							
Gestión	Financiamiento	Cómo se financian los maestros						
		Cómo se financian los insumos y recursos educativos						
	Araña contra estrella de mar (Asignación de Fondos) FFT							
	Información	Rendición de cuentas y contabilidad						
Voz y elección	Financiamiento	Sistema de Información y Gestión Educativa - SIGED						
		Propósito de los exámenes						
	Información	Diseño del examen (alineación plan de estudios-examen)						
Voz y elección	Financiamiento	Rendición de cuentas versus contabilidad para líderes escolares y docentes						
		Uso de la información						
	Información	Fuerza de la voz: ¿Tiene el nivel local alguna discreción sobre el financiamiento de la educación?						
Voz y elección	Información	Alineación de voz y elección: ¿Qué información se utiliza para fundamentar las decisiones de financiación?						
		¿Los exámenes estandarizados brindan información regular, confiable y relevante sobre el aprendizaje?						

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2: TRABAJO EN GRUPOS SOBRE RELACIONES (40')

	Tiempo	Responsable
Explicación de la actividad: se asignará a cada grupo	5'	Facilitadora: Magali
Organización de grupos en mesas y entrega de insumos	5'	Equipo Ecuador
Completar la hoja entregada (Anexo 9) con los sub elementos definidos a llenar por cada participante para que hagan un círculo sobre la alineación más relevante según ellos y escriban una justificación.	15'	Facilitadores de grupo (Javier, Dante, Monse). Como note takers: "The note taker should be a member of the research team to ensure that most important insights from the workshop are captured. Some insights may be subtle and contextual, so a sufficiently experienced and knowledgeable researcher should take this role. "
Discusión grupal (al interno del grupo) sobre la relación asignada.	10'	
Preparar conclusiones (wrap-up)	5'	Facilitadores de grupo (Javier, Dante, Monse)

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2. TRABAJO EN GRUPOS SOBRE RELACIONES (40')

Instrucciones para el grupo:

- Se formarán 3 equipos ya establecidos por el equipo de investigación, cada grupo se enfocará en una relación:
 - Pacto
 - Gestión
 - Voz y elección
- Considerar la matriz 4x5 iniciando por (finanzas o información en Quito) o (delegación, motivación, apoyo en Tena y Guayaquil) según la relación que le fue asignada a su equipo.
- Se les entregará worksheets (Anexo 9)
- Instrucciones de llenado: Escoja la alineación y escriba su propia descripción de este subelemento para su sistema. ¿Qué alineación parece representar mejor su sistema en este subelemento? ¿Qué más notaría sobre este subelemento en su sistema?

QUITO: INFORMATION AND FINANCE			
Group	Relation	Element	
1.	Compact	Finance	General: how is finance for education structured? Teachers how is financing for teachers structured? Non-teachers: how is finance for other education inputs structured? Discretion: where and to what extent is discretion for finance in education distributed throughout the system?
		Information	General: how is information for education structured? Quality: How does the system determine that education is of sufficient "quality"? EMIS: What information is included in the system EMIS?
2.	Management	Finance	How teachers are financed How inputs are financed? Spider vs. starfish (allocating funds)
		Information	Accounts vs. accounting EMIS Exams purpose Exam design (curriculum-exam alignment) Accounts vs. accounting for school leadership and teachers Information use
3.	Voice and Choice	Information	Alignment of voice and choice: Do standardized exams provide regular, reliable, relevant information on learning? Alignment of voice and choice: Beyond standardized exams, do families get other accounts of whether their child is learning?
		Finance	Strength of voice: Does the local level have some discretion over financing for education? Alignment of voice and choice: What information is used to inform financing decisions?

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2. TRABAJO EN GRUPOS SOBRE RELACIONES

Ejemplo de worksheet

Workshop ID:	Quito		
Relationship:	Management		
Feature:	Finance and Information		
Sub feature:	High level target, what does the executives set as the goal for the system?		
Alignment of relationship	Description of alignment	Description of high-level target for this alignment.	Description in your own words
	<i>Circle items in this column that describe your understanding of your system</i>	<i>Circle items in this column that describe your understanding of your system</i>	<i>Write your own description of this sub-element for your system. Which alignment(s) seem to represent your system best in this sub-element? What else would you note about this sub-element in your system?</i>
Consistent for learning	Relationship is aligned around learning goals. Clear goals for learning are articulated, financed, and supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executives authorities set clear, measurable, achievable goals for progress on cohort learning at early, middle, and late stages. Executives consider learning equity and equality of opportunity issues are considered in setting learning objectives. 	
Support for progress	Relationship is aligned around enrollment and attainment goals. System at focused on supporting "access" and grade attainment. Systems cut into almost quality but security in relation to this might not be the standard of what a minimum "quality" school is.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executives sets and manages towards goals to expand to universal enrollment and completion of a given level of schooling (basic, primary, or secondary). Equity, equality of opportunity, and inclusivity are all components, and are considered in terms of access and attainment. 	
Aligned for socialization	Relationship is characterized by socialization or ideological goal. These types prioritize socializing children into a set of values. Can be co-aligned with an access agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executives set goal to promote patriotic allegiance to the state, common national language, or transmission of religious values to next generation. 	
Patronage or "donut" systems	Relationship is characterized by clientelism. Short term clientelist objectives are dominant. These systems have lost a core educational purpose (i.e. learning, selection, or access). Instead, politicians and those in power use the system as a patronage tool (i.e. to hire teachers, or to build schools for certain constituencies). Often those who can opt-out of the public system (resulting in a large low-cost private school sector). This system pretends to be another type on paper, but in fact does not deliver schooling OR learning for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executives goals in education are primarily aligned around maintaining power for the regime. Decisions in education are dominated by political cycles. Policy objectives are weak but political objectives are strong. 	
Alignment of control to interest groups	Relationship is dominated by special interest groups. There can often be machine politics or coalitions that constrain the scope for action. Ensuring that these needs are met becomes the primary focus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executives focus on satisfying interest group needs. 	

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PLENARIA 1:

- Definir 1 alineación preponderante por cada grupo y explicar cómo se desarrolla esta dentro del sistema.
- Discusión ampliada

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ACTIVIDAD 2: Trabajo en grupos sobre INCOHERENCIAS

	Duración	Responsable
Explicación de la actividad: se asignará a cada grupo (3 grupos)	5'	Monse
Llenado de ejemplo de una de las matrices tomando en cuenta los sub-elements que el grupo pudo identificar previamente	3'	Todos
Colocar post-its en papelotes de la matriz establecida (ver siguiente diapositiva)	20'	Facilitadores de grupo (Javier, Dante, Monse)
Preparar conclusiones definir 3 incoherencias principales (wrap-up)	15'	Facilitadores de grupo (Javier, Dante, Monse)

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Ejemplo de tabla de incoherencias (Quito)

Incoherencias ENTRE Pacto y Gestión		
	Pacto:	Gestión:
Financiamiento: recursos que el principal asigna al agente para lograr las tareas.		
Información: cómo el principal evalúa el desempeño del agente		

Incoherencia DENTRO Gestión	
	Gestión:
Financiamiento: recursos que el principal asigna al agente para lograr las tareas.	
Información: cómo el principal evalúa el desempeño del agente	

Incoherencias ENTRE Gestión y Voz y elección		
	Gestión:	Voz y elección:
Financiamiento: recursos que el principal asigna al agente para lograr las tareas.		
Información: cómo el principal evalúa el desempeño del agente		

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PLENARIA 2:

- Definir 3 incoherencias principales
- Proponer acciones que se podría implementar para actuar sobre las incoherencias usando post its.

4

Example materials from the analysis phase

Analysis tools by the **JPC- VERSO** team from their diagnostic pilot in **Balochistan, Pakistan**

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SCHOOLS — COMPACT RELATIONSHIP

Principal organization(s)	Chief Minister and the cabinet of the Government of Balochistan and the Provincial Assembly of Balochistan			
Agent organization(s)	Department of Secondary Education, Planning and Development Department, Construction and Works and Finance departments			
Feature	Sub-features	No.	Description and justification of Sub-feature	Description of feature
Delegation	High level target: what does the executive set as the goal for the system?	1	<p>Access emerges as the most dominant alignment.</p> <p>The government has a stated (and legally binding) objective of universal enrolment and completion for age cohort of 5 to 16. BESP 2013 and 2018 have targets to reduce the gender gap in school availability at all levels and increase enrolments across all districts. Success for the principle-agent is increase in number of schools and reduction in missing facilities.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the stated goals of universal enrolment, schools are built by politicians for strengthening patronage networks and rewarding targeted groups within their respective electoral constituencies. The ruling regime from 2013 to 2015 was an exception to the extent that, compared to the preceding and following periods, there was a stronger desire for achieving access-related goals on the part of the principal.</p>	<p>Access is the dominant alignment with patronage.</p> <p>Stated goals of Principal are aligned with access. In actual practice, political interest dominates and overrides technical considerations. Alignment for access emerges strongly in stated policy but remains weak in actual implementation.</p>
	Human resources: how does the executive set out human resource goals.	2	<p>Access is the dominant alignment and patronage is the weaker alignment.</p> <p>The main HR factor is teacher recruitment. Introduction of examination (merit) based teacher recruitment in 2013-14 weakened the patronage factor that was nearly endemic prior to this change. After 2015, the pressure to use HR as an instrument of patronage returned and rose but with the examination-based recruitment still in place, the degree of patronage has weakened significantly compared to the pre-2013 period. There are rumours of compromise of the test based recruitment system after the initial major recruitment in 2014.</p> <p>The weakening of patronage has led to a lowered motivation of the principal to recruit more teachers. The outcome is that teachers are recruited but the processes for the same are delayed and meet only the bare minimum criterion in most cases. Shortage of teachers has emerged as one of the primary reasons of large number of new schools remaining idle or non-functional for years.</p> <p>While non-teaching lower staff (security guards, peon etc) make up a small proportion of the overall HR, their recruitment is driven almost entirely by patronage considerations.</p> <p>Teacher salaries remain high, and rising. Teachers' salaries are a multiple of their peers in private schools with a strong clientelist relationship between the principal and the teachers' union these are not revised for even new recruits despite an increasingly untenable pressure on the education budget.</p> <p>Quality is measured by thin observable features.</p>	
	De jure / defacto delegation gap: how much of a gap is there between articulated and actual goals?	3	<p>Aligned for patronage</p> <p>There is a wide gap between the written/stated and actual policy on establishment of new schools (specifically identification of school location, teacher availability etc.). Politically motivated factors override technical rationale. While access and learning are stated goals, patronage is the real objective. Schools are often built in areas that are not among the most-needed. This potentially leads to exclusion of parts of population that urgently need a school, while simultaneously having an oversupply in other areas. Once physical building is built, no serious intent or effort is shown to make the schools functional. Relatively lower political interest of the principal in recruitment and deployment of teachers leads to a gap between required (sanctioned) and recruited teachers.</p>	
Finance	General: how is finance for education structured?	4	<p>Aligned for patronage</p> <p>Finance is divided into development and recurrent (non-development) components. The former constitutes 15 to 20% of the total budget on average and is, theoretically, used for one time expenditures such as construction of physical infrastructure of schools. The recurrent budget consists of operational expenses. Almost 90% of the recurrent budget is taken up by the salary bill. The remaining 10% is used for operational uses like payment of utilities etc. The payment of textbooks and assessments (at primary and middle level) is also financed through the recurrent budget. Funding is not limited to public finance provided by the government. A number of critical (often new and innovative) inputs and processes are financed by development partners.</p> <p>Financial allocations in development component primarily target expansion of schooling based on the assumption that more schools and classrooms will lead to increased enrolment. Projects are identified and shaped largely by politicians. Secondary Education Department has limited influence on decisions of financial allocation and implementation. Fiscal allocations, within the available pie, result from political bargaining and relative power positions of political actors. As governments in Balochistan have always been coalitions of multiple parties, the power positioning and bargaining are not solely intrinsic to individual parties. The main political bargaining is across coalition partners. Given the limited influence of the Department of Education, their ability to get proposals accepted require a prior agreement of key political actors (depending on the relationship between the executive and minister) and in some cases where the finances are tagged to a larger support of a development partner finance and political leadership are constrained to agree to the allocation.</p> <p>While demographic considerations are vaguely considered in the decision to build new school, the principles of equity (gender, region, income) and inclusiveness are not given any meaningful weight. Political judgment prevails over any measurable criterion.</p> <p>Unit costs per student and salary considerations for teachers are not part of the initial planning process. The latter (teacher salary) are added to the budgetary bills later and therefore become another factor for friction and a cause of the gap between teachers required, sanctioned posts and actual recruitment.</p>	<p>Patronage as well as access</p> <p>Allocations for the development budget for school construction are driven primarily by patronage needs but the ostensible (though relevant) reason is alignment for access. The recurrent budget provides thin outputs for learning in the form of teachers, textbooks and functionality of basic facilities. The slow process of teacher hiring means a large percentage of newly constructed schools have not been made functional. This has resulted in the outcome being poor learning and weak alignment with access but the benefits of patronage dominate the reform.</p> <p>Resultantly, financing for establishment of new schools is aligned strongly with patronage politics. While politicians exercise centralised discretion over allocation and expenditure of budget for construction of school buildings and hard infrastructure, the financing for teachers and other non-infrastructure inputs of school remains comparatively less vulnerable to discretion. The latter is shaped and explained mainly by the introduction of rules-based recruitment policy for teachers and the need to ensure minimum supply of thin inputs of school. The differential/varying degree of discretion over finances for various inputs of school has resulted in a situation where financing for school infrastructure is made available much quickly compared to the inputs whose financing is relatively less pliable to manoeuvring and influence. Hence the slow progress on teacher recruitment.</p>
	Teachers how is financing for teachers structured?	5	<p>Aligned for access</p> <p>Financing for teachers is subsequent to construction of schools through a separate process (the Schedule of New Expenditure). This should, as per required process, be operationalised by default but budgetary limitations and low value on quality slows down sanctioning of requisite posts. Conversion to actual recruitment is mostly driven by the department, especially, after 2013 when testing filters were introduced. The discretion lies with the Department of Finance but the rigid paycales structures reduce flexibility for planning and increase the risk of enhanced deficits. This proves a disincentive to finance to encourage recruitment on the required scale. The constraint does not obviate the fact that the stated requirement for teachers in new schools is very limited (thinned out). Even at present nearly 80 percent of primary schools in the province are multigrade and there is a massive shortage of teachers of science, mathematics and English in the higher grades. The latter deficit is greater in girls' schools.</p> <p>The province has a standardised payscale structure for civil servants of all categories including teachers. It is bracketed into 22 grades. Teachers, depending on the level of school and the extant policy, get selected in grades 11, 14, 16 and 17 and then receive promotions accordingly. The paycales were revised in 2012 for the entire civil service which provided a major increase for teachers as well. In 2012 a new factor, exclusive to teachers in Balochistan, was introduced that has placed, and continues to apply, pressure on the education budget. This is the time scale process. Previously, unless promoted through the departmental process, a teacher could not receive salary of the next grade. Under the time scale policy, a teacher enters the benefits (salary etc.) of next scale after a fixed time irrespective of the completion of administrative promotion formalities. The shift to time scale was politically driven as the teachers' association were able to influence the principals effectively and the agents (the executive) despite protestations were forced to comply. These constraints impact all teachers - existing and new recruits.</p> <p>Post 2013, rules-based hiring mechanism has led to a shifting of political incentives of patronage to hire teachers. The principal now obtains mileage by ensuring a constituency wide recruitment (based on a degree of merit) and not chronistic patronage previously practice. The pattern shifted when a particular government prioritised education as a sector and introduced merit filters in teacher recruitment contrary to the previous practices and expectations. At that point, the scale and speed of teacher recruitment were greater. Later both slowed down as the political elite of the new government adjusted to the changed reality. Test based recruitment has now become irreversible. The principals have adjusted to use recruitment as a non-partisan approach to gain political goodwill in their respective constituencies.</p> <p>The drive from financing teacher recruitment also appears from the agent due to day to day managerial accountabilities and compulsions. There is a confluence of interest in more recruitment between the principal and the agent. The struggle remains on merit. While rules based recruitment has not been reversed efforts from the principal to play the system for chronistic patronage continues (the earlier conclusions notwithstanding). These efforts are resisted by the agent as the latter has to face a more stringy accountability process. The resultant is a slowed down recruitment process but continuation of the merit filter despite some dilution at times. (Note: for secondary level teachers hiring has always been through the independent provincial public service commissions. The above discussion essentially pertains to teachers recruited at the primary level. These form the largest percentage of the teaching force)</p>	
	Non-teachers: how is finance for other education inputs structured?	6	<p>Aligned for access</p> <p>While physical infrastructure and missing facilities are financed through development budget, textbooks, exams, trainings, curriculum and classroom learning material are financed mainly through non-salary component of the recurrent budget.</p> <p>Teacher training is funded through the development budget and partially financed by development partners that reduces the burden on the government. The main constraint is predictability as unlike the recurrent budget the development component is a negotiable instrument subject to competing demands every year. Similarly textbooks are provided, free of cost, to students every year through non-salary budget. The discretion lies with the Department of Education along with that of Finance. The political economy of textbook printing prevents innovative methods (like school stores from previous years' textbooks) to scale up. The expenditure on new textbooks is incurred every year.</p> <p>Classroom teaching and learning material is also budgeted through the non-salary component and procured at the decentralised (sub-district) high-school level. The latter has been involved in procurements after a policy shift in 2014 that eliminated the role of the provincial tier. It is perceived that this has enhanced the efficiency of procurement with increased relevance to school needs.</p> <p>Another shift has been large scale assessments by Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission (BAEC). The decision for this shift was driven by a proposal of a capacity assessment exercise in pursuance of a recommendation of BESP 2013-18 and strongly supported by the political and executive levels (strong confluence of principal and agent) that enabled funding for the process.</p> <p>Innovative ideas or monitoring related expenses are often financed by development partners. The case of Real Time School Monitoring is pertinent.</p> <p>Principals are reluctant to provide funds for any other access related work, beyond thin inputs, and withdrawal of development partners' funds from trainings and monitoring related areas risk discontinuation of such activities.</p>	

	<p>Discretion: where and to what extent is descretion for finance in education distributed throughout the syste?</p>	7	<p>Aligned for patronage Development component of the budget invites the bulk of patronage interest. Recurrent budgets are structured and predictable and do not attract patronage except as a ramification of development efforts of the previous years. The recurrent budget is constrained by the salary bill that constitutes 90% of the amounts. That leaves only 10% for non-salary components. The discretion of the government in changing recurrent budgets is almost non-existent as reduction will impact overstretched - resource starved-operations and the fiscal space in recent years limits the ability to expand. The outlays of the development budgets are also a given due to fiscal space. The question of discretion is invoked on allocations across areas within the development budget. This is, as already stated, decided through a political process of engagement, bargaining and adjustments. Changes to finance can be driven shifts in the approach of the political leadership, demand from the public and commitments to international development partners as counterpart funds to a larger financing of a project. Changes in practices can be induced by a major public policy scandal like a recent major investigation into corruption led to decentralisation of hte procurement processes from the non-salary component of the recurrent budget.</p>	
Information	<p>General: how is information for education structured?</p>	8	<p>Patronage Data on assessment is generated mainly by the Balochistan Board of Intermediate Secondary Education (BBISE), which conducts annual exams for secondary and high school years. BBISE is responsible for high stakes examinations. Data or information on the regular formative and summative assessments within schools is not collected and collated for systemic accountability and policy inputs - cohort learning is not being tracked. The BBISE examinations are structured towards testing rote learning. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) tests children (grades 1 - 10) for basic literacy and numeracy skills through rural based samples. ASER's data has been questioned due the methodology wherein sampling issues demonstrates trend that do not match professional feedback on the learning skills of students. The information in the above datasets is collected regularly and is relevant. However, the degree of reliability varies. In addition to BBISE, the Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission was introduced in 2014 to gather learning related data for grades 5 and 8 through a sample based assessment. The purpose of BAEC's data is to design or redesign the learning inputs and processes for better learning outcomes. However, grade 5 exams were subsequently abandoned. Besides data on hihg-stake exams, education management information system has been operational in Balochistan since the 1990s. Its information sets, evolving through the years, are targeted on covering all aspects related to access. These include enrolment, grade completion and availability of inputs like teachers, facilities, classrooms etc. In more recent years (2014) the system was upgraded with the nomenclature of Real Time School Monitoring (RTSM). The latter collects information on teacher and student absenteeism in addition to the data previously collected. In this sense some degree of utilisation of thin inputs is being recorded in the data sets. Process compliance is not covered in any datasets but school supervisors follow up on syllabus completion. Both the older process and the current RTSM produce regular data. There is a perception that reliability of data has enhanced after introduction of the new system. The data is available for the use of 'Agent' and 'Principal' but there is no evidence of regular use by the former and any utilisation by the latter. Demand for information by the principal is normally a response to a press report or some decision making like additional school construction. An exception was the period 2013-15 where the Education and Chief Ministers demanded data for policy making and the basis for improvements in data collection - including reliability and relevance- were laid in this period and led to the eventual reform of RTSM. The use of data was discontinued (at least systematically) beyond this period. In general (outside the period 2013-15) there is no or minimal demand from the principal to use data. However, irrespective of the above, the power of data is recognised at both levels - agent and principal. This results into a reluctance on sharing of data with any source - public or within the government - that would induce accountability.</p>	<p>Patronage Information regime between principal and agent is aligned for patronage with the exception of the period 2013-15. In the latter period information was utilized to design reform to enhance access through ensuring functionality of schools (a relatively weaker input for enhancement of learning) and also rationalization of cluster systems. The RTSM developed during the period helped check teacher absenteeism and improvement of missing facilities. Therefore, even in this reform period, alignment for access dominated the information sharing regime. In general, the demand for information by the principal is low and selective driven by needs of patronage despite rich longitudinal datasets available through the Education Management Information System functional since the 1990s and the Real Time School Monitoring (RTSM) that began functioning in 2015.</p>
	<p>Quality: How does the system determine that education is of sufficient "quality"?</p>	9	<p>Patronage is the dominant alignment but there is also weak alignment around access. The system does not measure quality or learning outcomes. An thin-inputs-centric data collection regime is in place, which is focussed mainly on availability of basic facilities in schools and teacher attendance. EMIS is used for tracking inputs and enrollment on an annual basis and also student attendance (on a monthly basis). This data is provided to the top and is rarely used except in allocations of the recurrent (non-salary budgets) to schools. Data is also available on results of high stake examinations but it is not utilised for measurement of quality and hence not a part of the systemic accountability structures (irrespective of the quality of the assessments). For construction of new schools, monitoring of the construction process is ensured in terms of progress against planned timelines and financial and physical targets including quality of construction by the Communications and Works Department. No systemic follow-up mechanism exists once building is completed. Even the accountability around thin inputs such as teacher attendance, missing facilities is weak despite availability of decent data. There is little appetite both on the part of principal and agent to use available information to make assessment or judgement about education quality.</p>	
	<p>EMIS: What information is included in the system EMIS?</p>	10	<p>Aligned for access EMIS is used for tracking inputs and enrollment on an annual basis and also student attendance (on a monthly basis). EMIS is not of low quality within the scope defined for it (the scope does not cover quality aspects effectively). The main gap is lack of use, especially, by the principal. This dilutes effective and relevant accountability of the agent. This data is provided to the top and allocations of recurrent (non-salary budgets) to schools are made on the basis of this data. These include expenditure on textbooks and budgets for procurement at the cluster level. In the procurement budgets 50 percent of the allocation is minimum standardised for all schools in the cluster and additional amounts are based on enrolment. Facilities are not linked to enrolments despite the need e.g number of wahsrooms are not linked to school population.</p>	

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SCHOOLS — MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP				
Principal organization(s)	Department of Education (Secretariat)			
Agent organization(s)	Attached departments/units, district education officers and teachers.			
Element	Sub-elements	No.	Description and justification of Sub-element	Description of element
Delegation	High level targets	1	Process compliance The system is primarily aligned for compliance in terms of ensuring inputs like financial allocations, information on teacher presence, provision of instructional material etc. Partly alignment for selection can be seen especially in the higher grades where pass percentage in examinations become the primary focus. Theoretically alignment for access can be seen as the de jure rationale behind construction and upgradation of schools. Practically the correlation between increased enrolment and new schools is low. Alignment for compliance is dominant component.	Process compliance is the dominant alignment. There is space for patronage as well especially in human resource management aspects.
	Alignment of curriculum and learning level of students	2	Process Compliance & Selection The system is aligned for compliance. Centrally developed curricula and textbooks are covered for teaching in the classroom with no measurement of student learning or systemic reviews based on learning. The expectations of the curricula are not matched with the endowments of the child in the early grades that creates gap right at the outset and it continues to widen into higher classes. High stakes examinations are aligned for selection as by default children with better household conditions perform adequately in these examinations to progress to higher education. The rest are dropped out of the system. While primarily aligned with compliance the system has a default weak alignment with selection.	
	Most important responsibilities	3	Process compliance Alignment for compliance is dominant as learning and even access are not considered as response variables. In terms of responsibilities for higher administrative positions decision making is aligned to patronage. This was lower in the period 2013-15 as the de facto powers of the Secretary were greater due to political support for merit. This swayed back to a political patronage dominance after 2015 and district education officers and other members of their team receive postings as a benefit of political support.	
	Spider vs. starfish: local discretion granted to schools/teachers	4	Patronage as well as process compliance The system is highly centralised and heirarchical and provides space for interest groups and political patronage through the principal. Beyond the principal the system is aligned for compliance due to the heirarchical structures mentioned above. Within the management relationship alignment for compliance dominates.	
Information	EMIS	5	Patronage as well as access The system is partially aligned to access as it collects information on enrolments. The other dominant alignment is of patronage as use of information is for thin inputs and does not comprehensively provide the picture of educational peformance. Follow up on data is sporadic. Again there is a divide between 2013-15 and 2015-18. In the former period data was used more systematically to design reforms.	Information on performance of agents is aligned around patronage whereas exams are aligned with selection for progression. Information is sporadic. Limited inputs are tracked. But even this information is not used to make decisions. As far exams are concerned, they are aligned for selection for higher grades.
	Exams purpose	6	Selection There is no alignment with coherent for learning. The system is aligned to compliance without any feedback loop of learning outcomes into the system. The main alignment is with selection as the few success stories of the system manage to score well in high stakes examinations and progress in the education system while others fall off.	
	Exam design (curriculum-exam alignment)	7	Selection All of the factors are valid. Examinations are poorly aligned with the curriculum and often test only memory and not conceptual and procedural mastery. Poor quality of examinations enable cheating but the primary factor for cheating emerges from lack of adequate resources in schools as often teachers of critical subjects are missing, poor learning in the schools due to a gap between learning needs and the curriculum and increased acceptance of cheating in the system. This cheating is induced by social demand rather than any systemic desire to pass more children from within the education system. In fact over the years there have been sporadic efforts from principal to eliminate cheating that met with resistance across the spectrum of society, especially, parents. The interest of the agents (who are also selected as exam supervisors) is in the political economy of cheating and not any systemic accountability predicated on examination results.	
	Accounts vs. accounting for school leadership and teachers	8	Patronage as well as process compliance No Information is collected on school leadership or teachers' performance in the class room. School Inspection or District monitoring teams rarely conducted inspections of schools and teachers delivry and when conducted it checks only the attendance of school teachers. Teacher absence from class room/school is penalized. The system is aligned with process compliance and thin description	
	Information use	9	Information about students' test scores and high stake annual exams are out there but no information exists on school inspections or district monitoring. Even if the information about test scores and exams exist, those are not aggregated or reported. Even if it is aggregated, these are not used for accountability of teachers ro schools. There is thus NO connection between information collected and improvement in learning at the class room level . Decisions are made at the top. There is no demand or willingness at the top to use available information in decision making, let alone improve the quality of information gathered.	

Finance	How teachers are financed	10	<p>Compliance (finance is focused on compliance & has no relationship to outcomes; limited corruption exists but not clientelistic system)</p> <p>Teachers' compensation package attracts relatively better quality candidates than private schools but other civil services attract better candidates than the education department. The system does retain teachers but it is not because of better compensation package but little availability of better options outside teaching. The main problem is of motivation. While compensation package is not the primary cause of reduced motivation, lesser opportunities for rent-seeking make teaching a less desirable option. Lack of ownership from the principal (department), a learning design incompatible with the classroom realities and non-inclusion in professional decisions - including classroom teaching-learning process - and reduced rent-seeking opportunities in teaching profession are the main factors to receding motivation teacher continue through their career.</p>	Process compliance is the dominant alignment.
	How inputs are financed	11	<p>Compliance Financing of inputs is focused on compliance and no relationship with outcomes and learning. There is no relationship between financing inputs and exam scores. There exists some corruption in financing inputs but they system is not a clientalist/patronage system.</p>	
	Spider vs. starfish (allocating funds)	12	<p>Not aligned for learning There is centralized funding with little discretion at the decentralized level. A very small percentage of total budget related to procurement of basic school material is decentralized at the the cluster level. Head Teacher or District Education Officers has little role in impactful financial decision like teacher trainings, textbook development or procurement, school infrastructure improvement or provision of missing facilities in school.</p>	
	Accounts vs. accounting	13	<p>Process compliance (current budget) with patronage (dev budget) Typically the teacher and non-teacher allocations are made on the basis of historical trend. There is no assessment of actual need of viability of the past expenditures. Little experimentation in spending under the recurrent component of budget. There is a complete disconnect from any learning targets. There is no connection with any education outputs or outcomes and there is no financial experimentation has never been attempted. In contrast, the development budget is spent in a highly discretionary manner. No effort is made to provide account or accounting for spending.</p>	
Motivation	Teacher professional status / intrinsic motivation	14	<p>Access Teaching is a relatively low status profession within society and the civil services structures, even within the department of education, and especially for males. Lesser control over exercise of authority/power and availability of fewer opportunities for rent-seeking are major reasons why teaching remains less desired than other administrative positions. The professional and social norms related to teaching are weak and discouraging. Monitoring primarily focuses on absenteeism and not performance. Teachers can be posted to administrative positions within the department. These positions like the district education officer carry more power and prestige than a teaching positions.</p>	Alignment for access is dominant although there is weak alignment around compliance as well.
	Career advancement and job security / Extrinsic motivators	15	<p>Process compliance Teacher career, beyond entry, is not linked to learning or the teacher's performance in classroom teaching and learning. None of the variables (exit, placement, responsibilities, appraisal, promotion, recognition and autonomy) are linked to the ability to teach in the classroom. These are either linked to seniority or provided (on the odd occasion) for non-teaching work. Teacher career structures are neither based on EMIS thin indicators nor on results of high stakes examinations or completion of curriculum. Seniority is the only criterion for promotion.</p>	
Support	Internal coherence/quality of instructional materials	16	<p>Not aligned for learning Instructional material is not connected to realities of the classroom - the learner. This makes them extremely difficult to teach and a major impediment in quality teaching and learning. Teachers' guides are not prepared in routine and where and when available are not used in the classroom due to the pressure of covering syllabi. Formative assessments are conducted but teachers are not provided any specialised training for quality assessment. Formative assessments in instructional material have the same issue of disconnect and poor learning value as the material itself (discussed above). No teacher training is provided, in routine, on instructional material even where curricula and textbooks are changed. In the odd situation, for a limited numbers, initiatives of development partners are implemented but they produce low value.</p>	Aligned for access & process compliance
	External coherence between training and other design elements	17	<p>Access Teacher training is a random process, sporadic and short term, which is rarely based on systemic needs analysis and fails to address any major teaching-learning issue in the classroom. It is incoherent with other parts of the system, in particular the curriculum, exams, and the need to tailor instruction to students' learning levels.</p>	
	Spider vs. starfish: form of instructional materials and teacher training	18	<p>Access as well as process compliance Pre-service qualifications are standardized (theoretically) as the basic degree requirement is the same and recognised by the Higher Education Commission. However, standards vary across pre-service training providers as the accreditation regime is weakly implemented. In-service training is irregular and often funded by development partners. Needs assessments for in-service training are aligned to goals and objectives of a particular project and not a systemic process of exploring and defining training priorities. There is no school or classroom level discretion over instructional material. Curriculum for the entire country is prepared by the federal government and textbooks, based on the curriculum, by the provincial textbook boards. Teacher guides are not a regular feature but when produced are developed at the provincial level in the provincial textbook board.</p>	

	Accounts vs. accounting: delivery of teacher training	19	<p>Not aligned for learning</p> <p>Typical in-service training is not characterized by hands on practice, coaching and mentorship. A position of learning coordinator exists for mentoring purposes, especially, for primary schools. Practically, the learning coordinators is neither trained for the function nor performs it. Horizontal professional networks for monitoring and support do not exist.</p> <p>There are huge variations in quality of pre-service training providers. Most pre-service trainings are essentially lecture based with little or no element of practice and application. Pre-service training is largely theoretical and of varying quality in the absence of a strong standardisation process.</p> <p>Professional accountability does not exist. Peer monitoring and support is voluntary in some pockets but not part of the education system.</p>	
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ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SCHOOLS — VOICE & CHOICE RELATIONSHIP				
Principal organization(s)	Parents			
Agent organization(s)	Heads of schools and teachers			
Element	Sub-element	No.	Description and justification of Sub-element	Description of element
Delegation	Alignment of voice and choice: What do parents want?	1	Aligned for patronage and selection.	<p>Aligned for patronage & selection</p> <p>Voice has been abandoned in favour of choice. Elites and middle class have opted out of public schools as well as villages. Collective action organizations (both formal and informal) are dysfunctional. In the rare cases where voice exists, it is focused on thin inputs and process compliance. The rare islands of success are distinguished by quality of community leadership (highly motivated community leader or non-traditional leader leading community).</p> <p>Tribal mode of social organization and norms of in-group solidarity and reciprocity often counteract and undermine formal forms of interest aggregation and accountability mechanisms. Political parties are weak and have limited organisational presence at the grassroots level. Prevalence of hierarchical tribal structure has facilitated clientelism and elite capture in most parts of the province.</p> <p>Families prioritise test scores (esp in high stake exams) and learning English language and almost equate them with learning. English language is perceived to be critical to upward social mobility and future career prospects. Private schools also play up on this.</p> <p>PTMSC have been established but most are non-functional. Little follow-up and monitoring on making them functional. They have failed to become the conduit of community interaction, input and feedback with school administration.</p>
	Strength of voice: Does the bureaucracy allow voice a role in governing schools? "Degree of distributed decentralization"	2	Aligned for patronage (weak voice) There is little local discretion at lower tiers of the system over how to pursue centrally set educational goals and standards. PTMSCs, Local Education Council and Local Education Purchase Committees have been created but their mandate is restricted to supervision of limited administrative tasks. Most of these social accountability forums are dysfunctional with few exceptions.	
	Strength of voice: Whose voice? To what degree is there internal community cohesion?	3	The local government system is weak and financially dependent on fiscal transfers from the provincial government. Periodic elections are not held regularly. Funding to local bodies makes up a tiny proportion of the overall development expenditures by the provincial government. Even this limited funding is not made available on time. Although, local bodies have a de-jure but vague role in management of primary education, provincial education department exercises this function for all practical purposes. There is elite indifference to voice, and the elite do not pressure the representatives of voice to take action on educational issues. The representative organs of voice are likely dysfunctional (while they may exist on paper, they do not meet, or have low participation, or focus on issues other than education). Social composition of parents as a stakeholder varies from primary to middle level. Parental interest relatively higher at middle and higher secondary level. Parents filtration process. Relatively well-off, highly-motivated and more educated parents remain linked with the education system.	
Information	Alignment of voice and choice: Do standardized exams provide regular, reliable, relevant information on learning?	4	Aligned for selection	<p>Aligned for selection</p> <p>Results of secondary school leaving exam and high school leaving exam are the most important information available to parents. Little information available on learning before secondary school. Exams don't measure learning levels. Instead, they encourage rote learning. Cheating is quite common and condoned by social norms. Admissions in top-ranked medical, engineering and other technical universities is highly sought-after by parents.</p> <p>How much students are learning is opaque to parents throughout most of schooling. At the primary level, majority of parents themselves have limited interest and lack the foundational literacy and numeracy skills to observe learning level of their children. At the Middle and High School level, the social composition of parents as a group changes as a result of a filtration process caused by dropouts. Parents as a group at the middle and high school level are a relatively more educated and well-off group, and have greater level of interest in the education of children. In addition to scores in bi-annual and annual exams, parents often rely on other proxy measures to understand the quality of their child's education, notably improvement in ability to speak English or read Urdu language (often parents make children read local newspaper headlines/stories).</p>
	Alignment of voice and choice: Beyond standardized exams, do families get other accounts of whether their child is learning?	5	Aligned for selection	
Finance	Strength of voice: Does the local level have some discretion over financing for education?	6	Aligned for patronage	<p>Patronage & selection</p> <p>Local level or the school tier has little discretion over financing for education. Decisions related to public financing for schools are taken at the provincial level with little local discretion except in case of procurement of basic equipment for schools. Parents and representatives of local community have officially been given a role in oversight of the procurement process through local purchase committees but most of these committees are non-functional or dysfunctional.</p> <p>Private spending on education is almost always individual investment in private schooling and tutoring. There is almost no private financing for public schools. In contrast, most madressahs are financed by private individuals through charity or Zakat (EXPLAIN).</p> <p>Aggregated information about learning levels doesn't exist. Aggregated information about enrolment, basic inputs and scores in high-stake exams (secondary and higher secondary) exists but is rarely used to justify public financing decisions. Major chunk of recurring budget is fixed and decided on the basis of past trends. For a tiny number of inputs, enrollment data is considered to make allocations.</p> <p>Although public financing is not strongly linked with information on learning, test scores or inputs, parents' decision to choose schools is based mostly on test scores at high and higher secondary level as comparable data on test scores is available. The information available to parents is about scores and pass/fail percentages of schools in high-stake exams (upper secondary and high school leaving exams). At the primary and middle level, parents often rely on other signalling instruments to choose schools. These include reputation of head teacher and teacher in case of public schools, socio-economic status of students or school in case of private schools and peer recommendations in both cases. Post-middle, exam scores and probability of getting admission in desired universities are used to justify decisions related to choice of schools.</p>
	Alignment of voice and choice: What information is used to inform financing decisions?	7	Aligned for patronage is dominant. Weak alignment with selection.	
Motivation	Strength of voice: Does the local level have some discretion over teacher career structures?	8	Aligned for patronage	<p>Patronage is the dominant alignment whereas selection is the weak alignment.</p> <p>Voice has little role in overseeing teacher career. Voice receives little comparable information about schools at the primary and middle level. Whatever information is received about individual schools (teacher attendance, student enrolment, water availability etc) at the local level, voice isn't empowered enough to act on the information. In the very rare cases where voice is represented by an "enlightened and benvolent" community leader or head, voice monitors and acts on information about school inputs. In most cases, tribal hierarchy and social norms of in-group solidarity and credible threat of social sanctions discourage emerging or young voices to act on the information available about school inputs, resulting in a highly weak social accountability.</p> <p>Parents decisions to choose schools is often based on test scores of the schools subject to availability of aggregated data on test scores.</p>
	Alignment of voice and choice: What information is used to inform judgments about school leadership / school choice?	9	Aligned for selection	

ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SCHOOLS — POLITICS RELATIONSHIP				
Principal organization(s)	Citizens			
Agent organization(s)	Elected politicians			
Element	Sub-element	No.	Description and justification of Sub-element	Description of element
Delegation	What do citizens want? Are they able to aggregate their preferences and translate desires into political demands (degree of internal cohesion)?	1	<p>Aligned for access Common citizens have poor understanding of "learning or quality education" but majority are concerned about the education of their children. However, there is difference between what citizens desire as individuals and what they demand as a top priority in the process of political agenda setting and interest aggregation. Citizens are poorly organized. Key barriers to organisation for collective action include poverty, prevalence of tribalism, armed conflict, and controlled democracy. Prevalence of chronic poverty has had disempowering impact on citizens' ability to organise and make political demands. This situation has been exacerbated by urban migration and forced displacement induced by drought and violent conflict.</p> <p>The relationship between majority of citizens and elected representatives is mediated and managed by intermediaries. Narrow or vested interest groups represent citizens and are often interested more in extracting personal gains (such as construction contract, transfer posting, jobs) from politicians rather than striving for collective goods and services. The only collective cause around which there is some visible citizen demand are construction of physical building of schools and provision of HR. Credibility of general elections and legitimacy of representatives is widely questioned though the 2013-18 regime was considered relatively more legitimate.</p> <p>At the macro-provincial level, issues around right to life and conflict have dominated public discourse. Public concerns about unlawful use of force and human rights abuses have dominated the public discourse and pushed issues of service delivery to the backseat, especially so in conflict-affected areas. "Crowding out" impact of conflict on service delivery issues can be observed to the extent of "politics" relationship.</p>	Patronage & Access
	What effective mechanisms are available to citizens to make demands?	2	<p>Right to vote, right to freedom of expression, right to participate in political activities and right to protest are constitutionally guaranteed but these have been undermined to a great extent by the prevalence of controlled democracy or de-facto authoritarian political system.</p> <p>Country-wide political parties lack interest in the province. Smaller ethno-regional parties dominate the political stage but they too have poor organisational presence at the grassroots level. Traditional tribal leaders, religious leaders and rich people are more influential at the local level and often act as the intermediaries between citizens and the State. While ethno-regional parties strive for consolidation of democracy at the country level, they lack intra-party democracy and are controlled and dominated by few dynasties, families or individuals.</p> <p>Civil society is tiny. Mainstream media has limited presence in the province and often faces censorship and curbs. Decades of conflict have had the worst impact on civil society and media. Local media is small and faces censorship. Use of social media platforms to make political demands is on the rise among the younger generation. Technology appears to have had an empowering impact on the voice of younger citizens. However, the effectiveness of social media platforms to induce sustained and meaningful political change is questioned.</p>	
	To what degree do citizens use the available mechanisms to make demands and exert pressure on the system?	3	<p>Aligned for patronage While the level of political awareness is generally high, actual participation in formal political processes is limited. Voter turnout is limited but public participation in protests and social movements is high. The relatively old citizens rely more on traditional methods to participate in political activities such as town/village-level political meetings and gatherings. Younger citizens are more vocal and active on social media. Few young people have resorted to public interest litigation to hold politicians accountable. Most people seem to have lost faith in the existing institutional mechanisms of political participation. Many have withdrawn from the "system" or resorted to extra-institutional avenues to express political preferences. Social movements led by younger people are on the rise. A segment of the population, mostly educated youth of middle and lower middle class origins, have resorted to armed struggle to express their discontent and anger against the State. Public advocacy with regards to education issues is negligible.</p>	
Information	What information is available to measure the performance of elected members of assembly and the Cabinet? How reliable is the information?	4	<p>Limited systemic information is available to measure and assess the performance of elected members of assembly and/or cabinet members.</p> <p>Disaggregated information is available about contribution and performance of members in the legislative assembly. All sessions are recorded and verbatim reports are uploaded online. Similarly, information about different legislative business is uploaded online. Minutes of meetings of standing committees are often uploaded (provided that meetings are held in the first place).</p> <p>Except legislative business, there is opacity of information about performance of cabinet and ministers. No measurable yardsticks exist to assess performance of the Cabinet. There is opacity of information related to executive decisions and breakdown and disaggregation of public expenditures.</p> <p>Government occasionally issues advertisements in newspapers to project performance. Elected representatives have lately also begun to use social media to project their performance. However, their usage of social media is not sophisticated. The information shared is limited, irregular, unreliable and user-unfriendly. The limited information they share is mostly related to construction of physical infrastructure and provision of jobs.</p> <p>The information shared by the executive tier can not be verified through independent sources. Independent policy think tanks, academia or non-profit organizations to objectively assess performance are nearly non-existent.</p>	Patronage
	To what extent do citizens use available information to hold elected politicians accountable? If reliable and accurate information is not available, how do citizens measure performance of elected representatives?	5	<p>Citizens' decision to assess performance of politicians is not based on some systemic data. Although raw data on legislative contribution of politicians is available, it is almost never used by citizens to assess their performance.</p> <p>In absence of systemic data and information, judgements about performance of the Chief Minister and cabinet members are based almost entirely on personal subjective experiences of people with them. It is very difficult to forge public consensus on the "good" and "bad" ministers. The subjective experiences of citizens about politicians are shaped mainly by the targeted benefits that they may or may not get from the latter. People assess performance of representatives based on the tangible inputs they have provided, physical infrastructure and jobs. Outcomes-focused performance assessment is non-existent.</p> <p>Additionally, intangible non-economic and social factors such as inter-personal skills, communication skills, public accessibility, participation in social occasions as marriages or funerals, also play a critical role in shaping citizens' judgement about performance of elected representatives.</p>	
	What are the major sources of public financing for education? How much of public financing for education comes from taxes collected by the provincial government?	6	<p>(Direct vs indirect taxation; centralized vs decentralized taxation system)</p> <p>Fiscal transfers from the federal government are major sources of public financing. Provincial revenues make a tiny proportion of overall budget. Taxation system is highly centralized and comprises mostly of indirect taxes. Tax collection is not linked or earmarked to a particular sector.</p> <p>The existing system has encouraged irresponsible fiscal behaviour, which has indirect implications for public financing for education. Citizens are generally unable to recognise their contribution in enabling public expenditures and therefore, uninterested in asking tough questions.</p>	

Finance	To what extent are citizens willing to pay taxes? What factors inform their willingness (or lack thereof) to pay taxes?	7	<p>Citizens are generally reluctant to pay taxes. They don't trust the government to provide quality education in return for taxation. Major chunk of taxes are deducted at source from salaried people who have little choice in it. The legitimacy of the State is weak. State is viewed as an "alien entity", detached from the society.</p>	Patronage
	To what extent do citizens have say or oversight role in budget formulation and allocations for education?	8	<p>Citizens have no or little oversight in budget formulation and execution. Interest groups, such as business community, have interest in budget formulation but they too are interested more in the federal budget. Typically, a pre-budget consultative session is held with business community at the provincial but it is non-productive and treated as a box-ticking exercise by both the Government and interest groups.</p> <p>Even assembly members and cabinet members have little interest in budget formulation other than development budget. The development budget is formulated almost entirely by members of the cabinet and provincial assembly, including members on the opposition benches. The share of each MPA in development budget is decided by the Chief Minister in coordination with heads of coalition parties. Beyond development budget, neither treasury nor opposition benches are really interested in budget formulation process.</p>	
Motivation	How easy is entry into politics for ordinary citizens (entry barriers)? Social norms around politics as a profession?	9	<p>There are strong entry barriers into politics. Dominance of political affiliation along tribal lines, lack of intra-party democracy and high financial cost of running elections and the consequent influence of big money are among the major barriers to entry into politics. Strong cultural barriers exist in case of women.</p> <p>Although people are skeptical of politics in general, politicians enjoy great de-facto power and social status. Abundance of rent-seeking and corruption opportunities makes politics a very attractive profession. Given limited presence of the private sector, public money is the main source of capital accumulation.</p> <p>These entry barriers mean that politics is monopolised by traditional tribal and religious leaders and rich businessmen (mostly belonging to construction sector), which has negative implications for prioritization of education.</p>	Closed order system
	What motivations (intrinsic/ extrinsic) exist for political elites to emphasize education delivery and learning for all?	10	<p>The state of capitalist development is primitive in Balochistan. It is an under-developed and pre-industrial society, meaning there is little pressure from labour market for prioritising education.</p> <p>There is little political competition around education delivery and improvement in learning. "Crowding out" impact of conflict on service delivery issues can be observed. Politicians use education as a means of patronage given that it is the biggest civilian employer and offers many opportunities for rent-seeking.</p> <p>The 2013-2015 period was marginally different in qualitative sense given that the Chief Minister and Education Minister were commoners and belonged to political parties whose core support based comprised educated middle class.</p>	



Example materials from the final report phase

Final report by the
**University of the
Witwatersrand** team from
their diagnostic pilot in
Gauteng, South Africa

RISE Diagnostic for Gauteng, South Africa

December 2022

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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Executive Summary

Using the 5x4 Diagnostic to better understanding misalignments in the South African governance system to improve early grade learning

Like many countries in the Global South, South Africa has a serious early grade learning crisis. The most frequently cited indicator of this is the 2016 PIRLS results which showed that 78% of schoolchildren do not reach the lowest proficiency level in reading. Over the past ten years, researchers have been hard at work figuring out how to improve reading outcomes at scale. Successful large-scale experimental trials have shown that an ‘education triple cocktail’ which consists of simple lesson plans, high quality teaching and learning resources, and a combination of just-in-time training and onsite coaching, can really shift the needle of early grade reading.

The problem however is that politicians and policymakers are not moving on that information. The big question is why not? The South African RISE team has taken up the challenge to find the answer using the 5x4 Diagnostic Tool. With a combination of a thorough review of both government documents and published research, as well as in-person workshops and interviews, the team identified specific points of incoherence and misalignments.

Politics, planning and the public service

We found that although South Africa has a well-developed national government planning framework, there is a substantial gap between intended goals and operational plans, budgets, and implementation. At the provincial level, where much of the resources for education are spent, politicians and senior public servants need to address multiple pressures, including ensuring all children get access to schools, meeting stakeholder demands (unions), addressing minority interests and improving learning outcomes. As in many governance systems around the world, there is an inevitable tension between politicians’ short-term political demands (media coverage, and ‘flagship’ and ‘legacy’ projects), and senior public servants’ mandate to ensure the long-term stability of the education system.

Within the provincial education department, the South African RISE team identified the problem of ‘cadre deployment’ (i.e. politically connected individuals) and the weaknesses within the professional public service as a barrier to improvement. These challenges are made that much more difficult to overcome in a period of declining per student expenditure and a national funding system that is largely formula driven.

Management and the challenges in the district office

To lead change to the ‘technical core,’ (effective teaching and learning in the classroom) requires capable professional capacity-building and accountability at the local level. Our research on the South African education districts shows that they have five constraints:

- (1) Insufficient capacity (too few posts);
- (2) Lack of professional expertise/patronage in appointments;
- (3) Multiple, and at times conflicting, bureaucratic deliverables;
- (4) Accountable systems not to schools, but upward to the provincial bureaucracy, and

(5) widespread deep distrust between teachers and district officials.

Even where districts are effectively managed, the absence of system-wide indicators of early grade reading and mathematics outcomes means that there is limited focus on the learning crisis.

Voice and Choice but no influence on the instructional core

At the school level, parent 'voice' and 'choice' are potentially powerful forces in the South African education system. The school legislation grants parents considerable real authority around both finance and school policies. But in the absence of reliable information on learning outcomes (other than the high stakes exit Grade 12 exams), parent governors cannot play a constructive role in system improvements.

With reference to 'choice', South Africa has an unintended legislative framework that permits considerable choice within the public school system. But as with the powers of parent governors, parents' ability to use their capacity to choose their children's school is limited by the absence of meaningful measurement of early grade learning.

The Wits RISE team analysis uncovered two critical priorities areas that need to be addressed to ensure that South Africa become more effective at driving improved early grade learning system wide. The first relates to professional capacity. There needs to be a more even balance between political leadership and leadership provided by senior public servants, particularly those with deep professional experience and expertise. Deep professional expertise needs to be cultivated both in middle management at the provincial head office and at the district level. The other key area is the need for widely accepted and accurate information/measurement of early grade learning. External test results for early grade learning needs to be accurate at the school level, conducted at frequent intervals and be accessible to all stakeholders in the system.

RISE Diagnostic for Gauteng, South Africa

Introduction

The central problematic that animates the diagnostic process is the question why education systems have not taken up evidence to improve learning at scale. To do this, the project adopted a framework broadly described as the 5X4 Education Systems Framework, with four relationships, which are referred to, in shorthand, as Politics, Compact, Management and Voice/Choice. Within these relationships, an analysis of the principal-agent dynamic is key. The second part of the framework was the features of these relationships, designated in summary form as Delegation, Finance, Information, Support and Motivation. In addition to the 5x4 Framework, the diagnostic includes 'orientations' or foci, around which the relationships and features coalesce. These are learning, access, selection, socialisation, process and patronage/special interests. Finally, the diagnostic includes three conceptual tools that also aid in analysing systems: the technical core, accounting vs accountability and isomorphic mimicry.

In the South African case, we have chosen to focus on four specific relationships: the National/Provincial (planning/monitoring), the Compact (political/administrative), Management (district /schools) and Voice/Choice. Our main activity is to use the framework to assess its usefulness in understanding possible points of incoherence and misalignment that would explain the failure on the part of the state to move towards a learning orientation. Documentary and interview data was collected both at national and provincial levels. At a provincial level however, most evidence focused on the Gauteng province.¹

¹ We would like to thank participating senior managers, both present and past, for their contributions to this analysis. That said, the authors are solely responsible for the report.

Politics: National/Provincial Educational Planning

In the first level of analysis, we have concentrated on the relationship between the national and the provincial political authorities, with scrutiny of the official planning documents.

In 2011, South Africa's National Planning Commission (NPC), an institution established by the President and working from his office, issued a vision for the country in which it identified goals for the next two decades (NPC, 2011). Reviewing achievements since the election of the first democratic government in 1994, the NPC identified a failure to implement policies and an absence of broad partnerships as the main reasons for slow progress.

In its National Development Plan 2030, the NPC set out nine primary challenges:

1. Too few people are employed.
2. The quality of school education for black people is poor.
3. Infrastructure is poorly located, inadequate and under-maintained.
4. Spatial divides hobble inclusive development
5. The economy is unsustainably resource intensive.
6. The public health system cannot meet demand or sustain quality.
7. Public services are uneven and often of poor quality.
8. Corruption levels are high.
9. South Africa remains a divided society.

The NDP noted that these challenges are interlinked:

Improved education, for example, will lead to higher employment and earnings, while more rapid economic growth will broaden opportunities for all and generate the resources required to improve education. (NPC, 2011: 15-16).

Chapter 9 of the 15 chapters, entitled *Improving education, training and innovation*, was devoted to education. Five priorities were identified, responsibility for which are shared between three government departments. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) and its provincial counterparts are responsible for schooling and hence for the first two. To a limited extent, the department is responsible for the third and fourth.

The NDP's priorities are:

- High-quality, universal early childhood education
- Quality school education, with globally competitive literacy and numeracy standards
- Further and higher education and training that enables people to fulfil their potential
- An expanding higher-education sector that can contribute to rising incomes, higher productivity and the shift to a more knowledge-intensive economy
- A wider system of innovation that links universities, science councils and other research and development role players with priority areas of the economy

The NPC also gave considerable attention to the institutional reform required to effect the achievement of these goals. In particular, it was noted that urgent action is required with respect to:

- Management of the education system and reducing the layers of bureaucracy
- Attending to the competence and capacity of school principals
- Improving teacher performance through training, remuneration, incentives, time on task, performance measurement and content and pedagogical support

Under the country's cooperative governance model, two sets of delegatory relationships exist: from the national Department of Basic Education (DBE) to the provinces; and from provincial departments of education to the districts and schools. While the DBE sets policy, the provinces refine policy to fit their contexts, and operationalise it in their respective sets of institutions.

Taking its cue from the NDP, and published in the same year, the national Department of Basic Education issued its *Action Plan to 2014: Towards the realisation of schooling 2025* (DBE, 2011). This was a broad vision for the school sector, which set 27 goals. The first 13 goals deal with outputs related to learning and enrolment, while goals 14 to 27 deal with *how* the outputs are to be achieved.

Five priority goals for the period up to 2014 appear in bold: these form the basis for a Delivery Agreement signed by the Minister of Basic Education and the President.

In his Executive Authority Statement in the Strategic Plan for the Gauteng Department of Education for 2020-21 (GDE, no date), the provincial Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education for the province outlined nine Strategic Outcomes:

Outcome 1 will focus on Early Childhood Development. The core elements of this goal will focus on the Grade R universalisation and will begin the preparations for the introduction of Grade RR in all Public Ordinary Schools. Delivering high quality Basic Education Services across the Foundation, Intermediate, Senior and the Further Education and Training Phases.

Outcome 2 will focus on the promotion of quality education in the Foundation Phase with the main emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy, expanding access to Special Schools whilst improving the quality of programmes for Learners with Special Educational Needs and the introduction of multi-certification programmes for our learners.

Outcome 3 will focus on the promotion of quality education in the Intermediate Phase with the main emphasis on Language and Mathematics.

Outcome 4 will focus on the promotion of quality education in the Senior Phase with the main emphasis on Language, Mathematics and Science.

Outcome 5 will focus on 'defending the crown' by continuing with the improvement of quality learning at Grade 10-12 level, promoting a modern skills-based curriculum; expanding and enhancing Schools of Specialisation.

Outcome 6 will focus on access to relevant curriculum offerings through Schools of Specialisation, Technical High Schools and Special Schools.

Outcome 7 will seek to create a safer schooling environment that will embody social cohesion, patriotism and non-violence in Public Ordinary Schools. This goal will further school sports, school health, anti-drugs programmes, girl-child support and guidance.

Outcome 8 will focus on changing the educational landscape to accelerate relevant and quality learning through twinning, resource optimisation, new improved school infrastructure, repositioning of principals and educator development and support, increasing and intensifying School Governing Body support and advisory work, improving District support and labour dispute mechanisms and, finally, resolving education disputes and implementing the necessary resolutions.

Outcome 9 will address the needs of the Gauteng youth through development programmes and increasing youth employability by developing a Master Skills Programme aligned to the requisite skills of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, continue with the Bursaries Programmes targeting poor and critical skills and promoting young writers and publications for use in schools.

As discussed in detail below, the Gauteng Province Education Strategy takes up the priorities set by both the NDP and successive Action Plans issued by the DBE, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: National Goals for schooling compared with GDE Strategic Outcomes

National Goals*	GDE Strategic Outcomes**	Outcome indicators**	Baseline**	5 years**	Reported ***
Goal 1 Increase the number of learners in Grade 3 who, by the end of the year, have mastered the minimum language and numeracy competencies for Grade 3	Outcome 2 will focus on the promotion of quality education in the foundation phase with the main emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy, expanding access to Special schools whilst improving the quality of programmes for Learners with Special Educational Needs and the introduction of multi certification programmes for our learners. Every learner completing the Foundation Phase with the required Language and Mathematics competencies	OCI-02: Every 10-year old is able to read for meaning (Reading standard in Systemic Evaluation and PIRLS)	PIRLs Literacy competencies (70.8%) Numeracy competencies (73.4%)	Literacy competencies (75%) Numeracy competencies (76%)	No report
Goal 26 Increase the number of schools that effectively implement the inclusive education policy and have access to centres that offer specialist services.					
Goal 2 Increase the number of learners in Grade 6 who, by the end of the year, have mastered the/ minimum language and mathematics competencies for Grade 6.	Outcome 3 will focus on the promotion of quality education in the Intermediate Phase with the main emphasis on Language and Mathematics.	OCI-03: Every Grade 6 learner is performing above the midpoint in Language and Mathematics (SAQMEQ Standard)	Language competencies (70.5%) Mathematics competencies (51.7%)	Language competencies (82%) Mathematics competencies (57%)	No report
Goal 7 Improve the average performance of Grade 6 learners in <i>languages</i> .					
Goal 8 Improve the average performance of Grade 6 learners in <i>mathematics</i> .					
Goal 3 Increase the number of learners in Grade 9 who, by the end of the year, have mastered the minimum language and mathematics competencies for Grade 9.	Outcome 4 will focus on the promotion of quality education in the Senior Phase with the main emphasis on Language, Mathematics and Science.	OCI-04: Every Grade 9 learner is performing	Language competencies (38%) Mathematics competencies	Language competencies (53%) Mathematics competencies	TIMSS 2019 scores reported (same as target)

		above the midpoint in Mathematics and Science (TIMSS standard)	(4%)	(25%)	
Goal 3 Improve the average performance of Grade 8 learners in <i>mathematics</i> .					
Goal 10 Ensure that all children remain effectively enrolled in school at least up to the year in which they turn 15					
Goal 12 Improve the grade promotion of learners through Grades 1 to 9.					
Goal 4 Increase the number of Grade 12 learners who become eligible for a Bachelors programme at a university.	Outcome 5 will focus on 'defending the crown' by continuing with the improvement of quality learning at Grade 10-12 level, promoting a modern skills-based curriculum; expanding and enhancing Schools of Specialisation.	OCI-05: Percentage of matriculants accessing post-schooling opportunities	43.7% Bachelor passes	48% Bachelor passes	45.09%
Goal 5 Increase the number of Grade 12 learners who pass <i>mathematics</i> .					
Goal 6 Increase the number of Grade 12 learners who pass <i>physical science</i> .					
Goal 13 Improve the access of the youth to Further Education and Training (FET) beyond Grade 9.	Outcome 6 will focus on access to relevant curriculum offerings through Schools of Specialisation, Technical High Schools and Special Schools.	OCI-06: Number of Schools of Specialisation established	9	32	35
	Outcome 9 will address the needs of the Gauteng youth through development programmes and increasing youth employability by developing a Master Skills Programme aligned to the requisite skills of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, continue with the Bursaries	OCI-09: Number of youth supported for employability through learnerships and	4 500	25 000	30 Target not achieved due to COVID-19

	Programmes targeting poor and critical skills and promoting young writers and publications for use in schools.	internships			
Goal 24 Ensure that the physical infrastructure and environment of every school inspire learners to want to come to school and learn, and teachers to teach	Outcome 7 will seek to create a safer schooling environment that will embody social cohesion, patriotism and non-violence in Public Ordinary Schools. This goal will further school sports, school health, anti-drugs programmes, girl-child support and guidance.	OCI-07: Number of identified high risk schools implementing a safe school programme	None	125	Reported against a wide variety of indicators
Goal 25 Use schools as vehicles for promoting access to a range of public services amongst learners in areas such as health, poverty alleviation, psychosocial support, sport and culture					
Goal 11 Improve the access of children to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) below Grade 1.	Outcome 1 Early Childhood Development. The core elements of this goal will focus on the Grade R universalisation and will begin the preparations for the introduction of Grade RR in all Public Ordinary Schools. All children completing Grade R should be school ready	OCI-01: Percentage of Grade 1 learners that completed Grade R	85%	95%	74.29%
Goal 14 Attract a new group of young, motivated and appropriately trained teachers to the teaching profession every year.	The word 'teacher' is not mentioned once in the 9 Outcomes listed by the MEC in the Strategic Plan (GDE, 2020a)				
Goal 15 Ensure that the availability and utilisation of teachers are such that excessively large classes are avoided.					
Goal 16 Improve the professionalism, teaching skills, subject knowledge and computer literacy of teachers throughout their entire careers.					

Goal 17 Strive for a teacher workforce that is healthy and enjoys a sense of job satisfaction.					
Goal 18 Ensure that learners cover all the topics and skills areas that they should cover within their current school year.	Outcome 8 will focus on changing the educational landscape to accelerate relevant and quality learning through twinning, resource optimisation, new improved school infrastructure, repositioning of principals and educator development and support, increasing and intensifying School Governing Body support and advisory work, improving District support and labour dispute mechanisms and finally resolving education disputes and implementing the necessary resolutions.	OCI-08: Number of pairs of schools twinned in the twinning programme	6 pairs	114 pairs	'Twinning programme was continued'.
Goal 19 Ensure that every learner has access to the minimum set of textbooks and workbooks required according to national policy.					
Goal 20 Increase access amongst learners to a wide range of media, including computers, which enrich their education.					
Goal 21 Ensure that the basic annual management processes take place across all schools in the country in a way that contributes towards a functional school environment.					
Goal 22 Improve parent and community participation in the governance of schools, partly by improving access to important information via the e-Education strategy.					
Goal 23 Ensure that all schools are funded at least at the minimum per learner levels determined nationally and that funds are utilised transparently and effectively.					
Goal 27 Improve the frequency and quality of the monitoring and support services provided to schools by district offices, partly through better use of e-Education					

* DBE, 2020; ** GDE, no date; *** GDE, 2021

The NDP devoted a whole chapter, entitled *Building a capable and developmental state*, to professionalise the civil service. The introduction notes several weaknesses, including tensions in the political-administrative interface; instability of the administrative leadership; skills deficits; the erosion of accountability and authority; poor organisational design; and low staff morale. The chapter devotes considerable space to the issue of corruption and how it may be countered and prevented, and calls for the separation of political and bureaucratic functions and the appointment of civil service on the basis of merit.

In line with these recommendations, the *Action Plan to 2024* acknowledges that insufficient discipline and accountability in the system, from the classroom up to the offices of some senior managers in the administration, continue to be a hurdle in the path of development.

However, at the time of the publication of both the NDP and the first Action Plan, the trend was accelerating in the opposite direction under the infamous ‘State Capture’ period in the country’s history. In 2020 President Ramaphosa revived this initiative, this time giving it legislative heft, issuing a draft bill, titled *A National Implementation Framework towards the Professionalisation of the Public Service* (RSA, 2020). According to the President, this legislation is aimed at: ‘... building an efficient, capable and ethical state free from corruption...’ (Ramaphosa, 2021: 1).

Regarding management of the **education system**, the Gauteng Strategic Plan makes the following points:

Quality of the Education System

The Department has implemented a set of standards, procedures and decisions with the aim of improving the learning environment. These standards comprise educational institutions of varying forms and with different governing frameworks, and while quality standards and procedures vary from institution to institution, they all focus on the same final outcome – the quality of learning.

In a situation where **the majority of institutions are underperforming**, a systemic approach is required to fix the failing systems. It makes sense too, in terms of resource allocation by tackling key aspects that will have wide and longer-term effects across the system, and in terms of change management where the focus is on ensuring system functionality before focusing on how to secure excellence in the subsystems. While this approach does not suggest a ‘revolution’, it proposes, instead, planned widespread reform that includes defining and rolling out the necessary support and monitoring systems.

The model recognises that the provincial level needs to lead in the implementation of policy through the provision of clear frameworks that spell out policy implementation expectations for the districts, circuits and schools. These frameworks should cover, as a minimum, curriculum management, learning programmes and common assessments, to

be rolled out consistently in every district, circuit and institution within agreed timeframes.

The GDE provides monitoring, training and resources in support of each of its Strategic Outcomes.

Grade R

The Department made provision for curriculum resource documents for Grade R, including exemplar lesson plans and pictorial daily programmes for Grade R learners in public schools and community-based sites. The review and mediation of Grade R annual teaching plans (ATPs) to districts and schools in line with the DBE trimmed curriculum² was undertaken. The Mathematics and Home Languages (HL) concept guides were developed to improve curriculum implementation.

Curriculum resource documents for Grade R were developed and provided for Grade R subjects. Mediation of the pre-screening tools for pre-Grade R was conducted for facilitators who will be training practitioners on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Practitioner training was provided for capacity building to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Grade R practitioners were enrolled for a four-year B.Ed. degree and third year diploma in Grade R teaching. The process of evaluating Grade R practitioners' qualifications at the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) was undertaken. The training programme for departmental heads on 'Leading and Managing Grade R' was delivered through an online platform.

Foundation, Intermediate and Senior Phases

The GDE Annual Report for 2020-21 (GDE 2021, pp. 54-55) describes several interventions designed to support teachers across the grades. For example:

The Language and Numeracy Strategy (LITNUM) – Grades 1-9 continued to ensure delivery of the graded readers to schools, in all African Languages. Lesson plans were procured for all the schools that are offering Tshivenda and Xitsonga Home Languages. Mediation was conducted on Grades 2 and 3 mental Mathematics books to all Foundation Phase Mathematics DSAs in all the 15 districts. In order to mitigate against the loss of teaching and learning time, a memo to guide schools on how to support learners at home during the lockdown was sent to schools and a list of online platforms to be used was provided. Schools strived to ensure that learners with limited or no access to digital platforms were meaningfully engaged during the lockdown. Baseline assessments were administered in the schools that were visited and were made available for purposes of verification. Microsoft Teams workshop were coordinated for Foundation Phase

² In response to time lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Mathematics lead teachers and DSAs on Base-ten strategies, Additive lessons and Multiplicative Reasoning lessons, to implement the Mathematics intervention.

The Read-to-Lead Campaign, which aimed to promote the love for reading, was continued. Learners were encouraged to read beyond the classroom. Teachers were encouraged to send reading cards home to be completed by the parents. Schools developed their own reading plan which incorporated spelling and dictionary quizzes for Grade 3 learners, including the phonics programme. Books were procured for the 2021 Phendulani Literacy Quiz competition. The literacy bus visited schools during this quarter and officials read to Grade R learners. The DAR campaign continued to encourage reading for enjoyment.

Schools managed to set aside at least 30 minutes per week by incorporating the DAR period in their timetables. Reading Clubs were formed at schools in the province to ensure optimal reading. Monitoring of this programme was effected with adherence to lockdown regulations during the reporting period. Revised plans were made for learners to take part in the activities during the lockdown.

The COVID-19 pandemic amplified the need to strengthen digital learning as a predominant feature of the curriculum and with a much stronger emphasis on remote teaching and learning. The Department introduced the 3-year Curriculum Recovery Strategy, which is currently being implemented in Gauteng. A basic premise of the strategy is that the starting point would be baseline assessments of the learning losses incurred in every subject and every grade, and that Annual Teaching Plans would be adapted in response. The process of 'catch-up' has commenced, and as indicated below, a range of programmes and interventions were implemented to support learners to reach expected competency levels, albeit through a multi-year process.

FET Phase

Beating the other nine provinces in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) is obviously considered by the GDE to be its priority goal, and the Strategic Plan and Annual Reports frequently refer to 'reclaiming' or 'retaining the crown'. Efforts towards this goal include:

In ensuring that the "crown" was successfully reclaimed and there was continuation of the improvement of quality learning in the FET band, last push/quick wins strategies were implemented. All subject specialists developed, distributed and mediated the examination guidelines, pinpointing areas where learners can obtain maximum marks per content area or per topic. The Last Push Strategy was mediated to all the district DSAs, SSIP tutors and teachers in the province. The last push strategies were mediated to all learners in the country via Radio 2000 from the beginning of the month of October 2020 and concluded prior to the writing of the papers in November 2020. The presenters in Radio 2000 were DSAs sourced from the province of Gauteng. The last push strategies developed, distributed and mediated with teachers and learners were developed for

Grade 12 learners and for the end of the year. The province ensured that there was a last push in preparing learners for term assessments as well. (Annual Report 2021/22 p. 72)

The 2020/21 Annual Report notes that, across the school phases and since 2014 to date, 44 419 educators were trained in technical subjects, Science, ICT, curriculum content and assessment. A further 8 536 educators were trained in Language content and methodology. As part of the Mathematics Improvement Strategy, 9 453 educators and 810 Special School educators were trained in Mathematics content and methodology. Teacher training is important to support curriculum delivery. In total, 4 750 SMT members received Leadership and Management training, with over 500 curriculum facilitators being trained annually to improve support offered to educators at school level.

Assessment of learner performance

As noted above, the GDE repeatedly emphasises that all its systems are geared towards raising the quality of learning. The most important indicator of systemic performance, therefore, must be test scores at all levels targeted by the first 5 Strategic Outcomes (Table 1).

There is a very noticeable slippage in Table 1 in the indicator targeted by the GDE to measure the quality of Grade R provision. Goal 11 of the national Action Plan is focused on *quality ECD* and, in GDE's Strategic Outcome 1, this is defined as the *school readiness* of those entering Grade 1. Good and well, but in the next column the Outcome Indicator performs a neat sleight of hand and proposes measuring this goal against the percentage of Grade 1's who *complete* Grade R. This conflation of quality and quantity flies in the face of all ECD literature published in the last three decades, which emphasises not only that if ECD provision does not meet high quality standards, it provides little or no advantage to young children. It also emphasises that, if high quality ECD is not followed up by high quality schooling in the lower grades, its effects soon fade as children progress through the system (see, for example, Bendini and Devercelli, 2022).

The GDE is missing an important opportunity here, particularly in the light of attention currently being placed on ECD, as the sector is transferred from the Dept of Social Development to the DBE. To prepare for this transition, a major report on the quality of education and care for children aged 4-5 in the country was released in April 2022. This report used the ELOM (Early Learning Outcomes Measure) instrument to assess the state of a large sample of 4-5-year-old children in 5 learning domains: Gross Motor Development, Fine Motor Coordination and Visual Motor Integration, Early Numeracy and Mathematics, Early Literacy and Language, and Cognition and Executive Functioning. It would have been more worthwhile for the GDE to put its 5-year-olds onto a constructive development path, using ELOM, which over the last 5 years has gained wide currency in the field and has been available for use since 2016 (Dawes et al, 2016), to measure the effectiveness of its Grade R programme. Instead, the GDE reports that:

'...the quality of Grade R education in Gauteng has improved over the past few years. By the end of 2018, only 66 public schools did not offer Grade R.' (GDE, no date: 34)

Participation in Grade R is by no means a guarantee of academic advantage, as indicated by an evaluation commissioned by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) in 2013, which concluded that impact was only discernible for children attending Quintile 5 and, to a lesser extent, Quintile 4 schools (van der Berg et al, 2013). The rapid roll-out of Grade R provision across the country appears, in effect, to be exacerbating inequality by strengthening the early educational experiences of the most affluent cohort of children, while the very poor quality of Grade R and ECD offered to poor children leaves them no better off. The GDE seems to be oblivious to this message.

Foundation Phase

The GDE's Outcome Indicator for the first three grades is: *Every learner completing the Foundation Phase with the required Language and Mathematics competencies* (Table 1). However, in detailing how this target is to be measured, the Outcome Indicator 2 (OCI 02) becomes: *Every 10-year-old is able to read for meaning*. The first problem here is that the measurement of mathematics has been lost. A second problem is that it is proposed that OCI 02 is measured as follows:

Numerator: total number of 10-year-old learners who can read for meaning as per Systemic Evaluation or PIRLS

Denominator: total number of 10-year-old learners who were tested to read for meaning as per Systemic Evaluation or PIRLS.

Multiply by 100 (GDE, no date: 77).

This is a problem because, since the discontinuation of the ANA in 2015, there is no systemic evaluation currently and PIRLS (the international assessment programme Progress in Reading Literacy Study) does not disaggregate scores by province. In other words, it is currently not possible to measure OCI 02. In this regard, the GDE could take a leaf out of the assessment book of the WCED, which has administered tests to its learners, on a population basis in languages and mathematics in Grades 3, 6 and 9 since 2002. In this regard, the GDE intends to '*... implement new and innovative ways of assessing learners through the National Integrated Assessment Framework for Grades 3, 6 and 9 as a replacement for ANA.*' (GDE, no date: 8), but no details are provided.

Despite these problems, the GDE quotes both baseline figures (70.8% for literacy and 73.4% for maths) and targets for Grade 3 (Table 1) and states that *Learner performance in the Foundation Phase (Grades 1, 2 and 3) is on standard*. These figures were somewhat puzzling, until further research revealed that they reflect the percentage of Grade 3 learners in the province achieving at least 50% in the ANA exercise in 2014 (DBE, 2014).

Intermediate Phase

The situation regarding the assessment of language and mathematics in Grade 6 is similar to that in Grade 3 (see Table 1), with the following differences:

- The SACMEQ (the regional comparative assessment exercise Southern and Eastern Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality) test scores are targeted by OCI02 as the measure for both subjects.
- The baseline measure for mathematics of 51.7% (see Table 1) is actually the percentage of learners in the province who scored at least 50% on the 2014 ANA test.
- It is not clear how the corresponding figure of 70.5% for language was obtained, since the ANA score was 79.8%.

Here, too, learner performance is deemed to be *on standard*. However, the GDE may want to reflect on the performance of the province in the SACMEQ exercise. While the country average between the 2007 and 2013 iterations rose very markedly in both language and mathematics, the increases exhibited by Gauteng learners were considerably more muted (Table 2).

Table 2: SACMEQ reading and maths scores 2007 and 2013

	Reading			Maths		
	2007	2013	Increase	2007	2013	Increase
Gauteng	573.1	579.9	6.8 (1.2%)	545.0	576.9	31.9 (5.9%)
South Africa	494.9	538.3	43.4 (8.8%)	494.8	551.5	56.7 (11.5%)

Source: Hungi, et al, 2010; DBE, 2017

Senior Phase

Strategic Outcome 4 targets the promotion of quality education in the Senior Phase, with the main emphasis on Language, Mathematics and Science. However, as in the case of the previous outcome, the relevant indicator reduces this to a focus on mathematics and science only:

OCI 04: Every Grade 9 learner is performing above the midpoint in Mathematics and Science (TIMSS standard).

Table 1 gives the following baseline figures for OCI4: Language competencies (38%) and Mathematics competencies (4%), but it is not clear how these were derived.

As one of two relatively highly urbanised provinces, Gauteng should be aiming far higher than ‘retaining’ or ‘regaining’ the ‘crown’ of best performance in the annual NSC examinations. Similarly, rather than crowing that the province’s achievement in the TIMSS Grade 9 mathematics test indicates that ‘Gauteng becomes one of the provinces that is able to compete across the world’ (GDE, 2021: 73), the GDE would do far better to focus on Pritchett’s contention that ‘South Africa is the single biggest learning underperformer relative to GDP per capita among low, and middle-income countries...’ (Pritchett, 2019: 2).

Gauteng does its citizens no favours by setting low benchmarks and comparing its performance to that of the country’s rural and highly impoverished provinces. It may do far better to set

absolute benchmarks against the achievements of other middle-income countries, or even much poorer countries, such as Kenya. Pritchett, drawing on 2007 data, argues that students in the poorest quartile of schools in Kenya do better than students in the richest quartile of schools in the best performing province of South Africa (the Western Cape), despite the fact that the school average per capita consumption is 18 times higher in the Western Cape top quartile schools than in the Kenyan lowest quartile schools (Pritchett, 2019: 4).

Nevertheless, the NSC exam results do provide the one relatively objective benchmark by means of which the provincial system is monitored, by school and school subject. The results provide sensitive indicators by means of which the systems designed to support Grade 12 learners and their teachers, may be monitored and refined by means of indicators, such as Percentage of Grade 12 learners achieving 50% or more in Mathematics (30.55%) and Physical Science (33.48). Because these are outcome indicators which are amenable to accurate measurement, it opens the way to assess the effects of support activities, such as camps for Grade 12 learners organised under the auspices of the Secondary Schools Improvement Programmes.

This focus on NSC exam results, along with the development of sensitive indicators of Grade 12 learner outcomes, was very evident in the interview with Pamela (District Director). She indicated to us that Gauteng has high-level managers with strategic and operation skills but, in the absence of any publicly accessible information about early grade learning outcomes for all schools, civil servants are unlikely to prioritise early grade learning. In other words, in the absence of measures to assess whether early grade learners and schools are doing well or not, there is no pressure for accountability. While Pamela spoke at length about her very strong management techniques and approaches, there appeared to be weak capacity for collecting information about learner outcomes beyond Grade 12.

Pamela's interview indicated that she and her colleagues are driven by the need to collect detailed and accurate information and targets for improving scores of matric pass rates from 89-92%. So, although she is able to highlight that her District is the best in the country in terms of matric results, without data from other grades she has no data for monitoring and evaluating early learner performance:

***Pamela:** I think the major target for any district would be the learner performance because that is also what we are evaluated on. **So I think that becomes centre core on how, in particular, are Grade 12 performing out of the National Senior Certificate. But obviously, also across all the grades we monitor, we make sure that teaching and learning outcomes are where we want them to be.** Our district, City South, is not only the top performing district in the province, but also in the country, for the last number of years. So it really is the major essence of what we try and do within the district, I think then added to that comes the issues of you know, policy and policy accountability, making sure that schools are doing what they're supposed to do. We also like to look at audit requirements in terms of school readiness, and attendance and those items. But basically, on that level,*

we ensure that there's a delivery on national directives and national plans, and you know, we make sure the schools are operational and functional.

Interviewer: *Okay, that's great. And tell me specifically about the situation for the Grade 12s, and the matric results. How do you analyse those results?*

Well, those results we thrash out totally to see where we can improve the districts to try and assist schools to get every learner to pass. In 2019 the district was just over 90% pass rates for Grade 12. And then of course your last two years, we took a dip, we went down to 87%. And last year we were able to arrest the drop, and I think we came in at 89 again, or just under that. This year, we said, 'Look, we're going to try and push hard to get back into the 90%, as close to 95 as possible.' So we're basically tracking every learner in that Grade 12 group. We're sitting this year with just over 13,000 candidates, and we've worked out that we've got a pass about 12,300 to get our 95%. And what we've done is we've taken every school and dissected where every learner sits and fits. So, to get our targets, we've identified which learners have the potential to pass. Of course, we have learners that are failing one or two subjects, some of them are failing a home language, and we know that if they fail their home language, then they fail everything. So, we're literally going learner by learner to see where is the shortfall, and what programs can we put in place to, to push them into the passing band. We're also actually targeting specific learners to go to the residential camps, and specific learners to go to the walk-in camps so that we can support that learner. Now it's no more about teacher development, or trying to get the teacher to close gaps. It's really about what is the need of the learner, and how best can we push the learner over that finish line.

The foregoing discussion draws on government policy documents and interviews at the supra-national, national and provincial levels of the school system. The insights about the relationship between national and provincial are tentative and subject to elaboration by means of interviews with key officials in the GDE and the examination of documents obtained from these sources. The three main insights are:

1. In terms of the content and outcomes of schooling at the policy level, there is clear alignment, from the Office of the President, through the national Department of Basic Education and the provincial Member of the Executive Council, to the SG, the most senior official in the GDE. The priorities are: universal ECD, through one year of Grade R (the year before Grade 1); improving literacy and numeracy teaching and learning in the first three grades; building teacher professionalism through training; and tightening the management of districts and schools. In addition, the NDP in 2011 raised the issue of corruption and a lack of professionalism in the civil service, issues that have been revived by the President in the last two years. Both the DBE and the GDE have added considerably

to this list, and the one criticism that can be raised is that there are too many policies, which collectively target too many areas for any of them to be realised effectively.

2. In terms of shaping the educational civil service into a professional, well-oiled machine, there is little evidence that these goals are pursued with any rigour. Thus, while the GDE states that the majority of institutions constituting the provincial school system are underperforming and lists a host of activities designed to improve the functionality of the 15 districts which support schools, little evidence of tracking the effects of these activities is provided in the documents. As a results, many activities, such as training provided to school managers and visits by district officials to schools, are likely to become little more than box-ticking exercises.
3. At all levels of the system, the GDE lists a myriad of inputs (training, curricula, materials) but only at the level of Grade 12 are any output measures provided. For Grade R, the goal of *school readiness* morphs into *access*, even though a well-established outcome measure to track the physical, social and academic development of 5-year-old children is in use by the DBE. In the Foundation, Intermediate and Senior phases, the indicators targeted by the GDE are obsolete (such as the defunct ANA system), or applied too infrequently and are not sufficiently fine-grained to identify areas of greatest need (such as the international test programmes PIRLS, SACMEQ and TIMSS).

Compact

A key relationship that might explain the failure on the part of the state to prioritise improvement in learning is the relationship between the highest political executive of the state and her counterpart at the head of education authority, ministry or department. The problems that arise at the nexus between political authority and professional capability are recognised in South Africa. The National Development Plan (20xx) identifies that tensions in the “political-administrative interface” are a central challenge for public service reform. In the case of provincial departments of basic education, it is the relationship between the Member of the Executive Council for Education (provincial minister) and the Head of Gauteng Department at the rank of Superintendent General/Director General and her immediate subordinates in the executive management team.

Notwithstanding widespread recognition in the desk review (secondary literature) of tensions at the “political-administrative interface”, interview findings provided a somewhat different and more nuanced perspective. As a reviewer of an earlier draft of the report noted, the principal-agent conceptualisation could detract from the observation that top bureaucrats are not merely ‘passive instruments’ of the political executive of the day, but also serve the vital function of organisational continuity, effectiveness and moderation. In fact, there was very little reference to top-down imposition, tensions and incompatibilities between the principal and agent in our interviews. These findings from the interviews prompted our rethinking of some of our earlier understandings derived from the desktop review. We do, however, need to provide a cautionary methodological note concerning a potential ‘distortion’ in our interviewee sample. Drawing on Ball’s (2005)³ pioneering research on how to analyse interviews with elite civil servants and state officials, we acknowledge that some of our interviewees may have felt constrained or hesitant to make critical statements about their Principal (the MEC). Some may even have been ‘massaging’ their responses to conform to the state’s official messaging on its education policies and implementation strategies. In other words, by virtue of still being employees of the state, our interviewees may have avoided or moderated criticisms of the political leadership and the broader functioning of the Gauteng Department of Education. This could perhaps explain why there was so little direct reference to the role of patronage and ‘special interests’. As highly articulate education professionals and senior bureaucrats, they may have resorted to standardised, and possibly sanitised, narratives that reinforced ‘the official line’. Notwithstanding these possible limitations, the interviews provided us with important insights that variously modified, nuanced and, in some instances, confirmed our understandings and arguments.

Some of these key findings that informed our understandings of the compact came from the interviews we did with Anne (DDG), Brian (DDG) and David (SG).⁴ These interviews challenged our earlier findings from the desktop review that alluded to tensions between the political

³ Ball, S. J. (2005). Researching inside the state: Issues in the interpretation of elite interviews. In *Researching Education Policy* (pp. 113-125). Routledge

⁴ Throughout the report we use pseudonyms for the interviewees.

positions and priorities of the MEC/Premier (the Principal) and the professional managers (the Agent). In fact, Brian, Anne and David told us that, as senior managers, they often accommodated and endorsed the MEC's priorities and facilitated his priorities and his desire for high profile and publicly visible political interventions. The interviewees also mentioned that, as senior managers, they were able to find a modus operandi for negotiating a positive relationship with the MEC, hence they did not identify a misalignment between principal and agent. In fact, they suggested that both the principal and the agent were generally able to realise their mutually shared priorities and objectives. In addition, when it came to the compact, the interviewees claimed that there was a considerable amount of constructive communication, interaction and negotiation between the MEC and the senior managers in the Gauteng Department of Education. This level of close cooperation and interaction is highlighted in the following excerpts from the interviews with Brian and David:

Brian: *So, the Premier and the MEC have got a Performance Agreement that's signed with five year targets that are quantitative in nature. And they focus on things like Grade 3 enrollment towards universalisation, survival rate of Grade 1's, and Grade 3,6, 9 and 12 performance. There is a very big focus on international testing in that Agreement.*

So we've got to produce these reports. They are one on one meetings. I mean, at the technical level, I would sit with the MEC and the M&E people from the Office of the Premier. But then there would only be a bilateral between the HOD, the MEC and the Premier. And they would then go into detail about this performance

Interviewer: *that would certainly be part of the contract that we're talking about.*

Brian: *Let's put it in this context. The MEC at the start of his term will come in and say "I've looked at your report and understand what's happening, I think we get to do the following in line with other national commitments." When our MEC came in, he came in with 20 priorities which we grouped into five strategies. And what we then did was to basically populate his thinking with the provincial data... The MEC came back to us to ask "What do you think are the real problems in Grade One", and so on.*

Interviewer: *This goes to the next question. I mean, if you as top management decided, with the MEC, that you really wanted a very different kind of budget because substantial more money is needed, for example because the Foundation Phase shouldn't have class sizes of more than 25. Would there be a possibility to intervene in the financial system?*

Brian: *We've already done that.... We wanted to reduce Foundation Phase class size [and] they gave us R100 million to do this.*

Interviewer: *So the MEC was open to substantially rethinking the core finance, which is around salaries.*

Brian: *And, you know, because we're working with the same technical people over the years, their insight into education as employer, and they can interrogate education better*

than what it used to be 15-20 years. And so those questions that we ask our hardcore operational questions and policy choices.

The interview with Anne provided further evidence of the absence of conflict or contradictions between the priorities of the MEC and the interviewees. Instead, as we will see in the interview excerpts below, Anne provided numerous examples of strong convergences between her perspectives and priorities and those of Principal (i.e., the Premier and MEC). Her examples included shared perspectives on the important role of language learning as a vehicle for 'social cohesion', as well as endorsement of the MEC's promotion of the 'twinning' of working-class township schools with middle-class suburban schools in to facilitate the sharing of resources, such as sports fields and other school infrastructure. Other examples put forward by Anne included her support of the MEC's prioritisation of ICT strategies for learning through the provision of smartboards and other digital resources. Anne also spoke in some detail about her endorsement of the MEC's commitment to using the transformation of education in order 'to build social cohesion'.

***Anne:** School infrastructure is another priority of the MEC. But, in our lifetime, we will never be able to build all the halls, sports fields, and so on that are needed in our township schools. But in the well-resourced suburban schools, which are still public schools, how do we then bring them together with township schools so that there can be a sharing of those resources? So that's the one. Sharing is not just physical resources, it's also about expertise. How do you share expertise from the two schools, how do you share the best teachers and ICT resources. Another priority of the MEC is about social cohesion... The MEC always talks about having children being able to play together; you have your different language, you have your different sports, but how do we build as a country so that we don't have this polarity that is currently in our country... So how do we make sure that we take we have learners who are in the suburbs, so they can experience what's happening in the township? Because some of our kids have never been to the township? We need to give our learners an opportunity to see how others live to build social cohesion...*

Due to the methodological limitations derived from our specific sample of interviewees (see above), we are hesitant to make any definitive statements about the nature of Principal-Agent relationship. Yet, it does seem, based on the interview responses of Brian, Anne, and David, that there is a need for further research to test whether there is indeed solid evidence of conflicts and divergent priorities intrinsic to the Principal and Agent relationship. The interviews seemed to indicate that the managers were able to accommodate the MEC's needs for political visibility and they willingly cooperated to create opportunities for the MEC to achieve his objectives. In other words, there was very little evidence from the interviews of misalignments and incompatibilities between the roles of the Principal and Agent. In the following section, we return to the legislative framework that guides and underpins this relationship.

The *South African Schools Act* (s 3.3) requires the provincial Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education to "ensure that there are enough school places so that every child who lives

in his or her province can attend school". The Act further states that MEC must support public schools out of funds appropriated for this purpose by the provincial legislature (s 12.1). To fulfil this obligation, the MEC allocates the funds from the provincial legislature to the Head of Department (the accounting officer) and his or her department. South Africa has a cooperative governance model (Chapter 3 of the SA constitution of 1996 and Schedule 5 Part A), which makes education a concurrent function of national and provincial departments. This means that, while the MEC is the principal in the principal- agent relationship with the Department, this principalship is limited by his or her need to act in consort with the national minister whose function it is to be the political head of the national ministry. Similarly, while the provincial department is the agent, the provincial department is at once responsive to its political principal but also is accountable to the national department. If there are to be misalignments or incoherence, it may stem in part because of the dual lines of accountability and responsiveness, at once between principal and agent, as well as between provincial department and national department. This insight clearly demonstrates the need to locate any analysis in the diagnostic within the legal/governance framework, and that the notion of 'delegation', even broadly conceived, in the absence of a legal analysis would be insufficient and could lead to critical oversights.

The second issue is the unique problem related, not to the MEC, but to the political appointments in the senior executive positions in the province. In the 2022 State of the National Address, the South African president explicitly referenced the debates about 'cadre deployment' and the need for a new framework for appointing senior public servants. Largely as an outcome of South Africa's particular history associated with the liberation movement, during the early stages in the transition, there was a concern about old apartheid bureaucrats actively working against the new democratic dispensation. This may partly explain why the ANC government resorted to what is known as 'cadre deployment'. Although it is standard practices in most democracies to have senior public officials as political appointments (Matheson et al 2007), in the past decade it has emerged that some of these have not only been political appointments, but have included those unqualified and managers who lacked the capacity to fulfill their duties. This was evident in the South African Broadcasting Corporation and other parastatals, such as South African Airways and local government. In some cases, it also occurred in national and provincial departments. In terms of the RISE diagnostic features (i.e., delegation, information, finance, support and motivation), the misalignment was that political appointments are made for narrow political (and possibly patronage) reasons and candidates are not always qualified/expert for the job.

There is some reason to suggest that the problem is about how we conceptualise the respective roles of the principal and agent and the very nature of setting up the problem in this manner. The principal-agent formulation, however, does not adequately allow for an analysis of different role functions. The role of the principal in this case is to drive innovation and change on the basis of the electoral mandate. In contrast, a major role of the agent, the Head of Department, is to ensure efficiency, continuity, stability and professional management. In essence, seamless alignment would undermine the role that the senior officials play as a 'check and balance' (from

Montesquieu). The senior executive needs to exercise reasonable independence, moving between implementing the political mandate of the politician and ensuring stability, control and certainty, which are the preconditions for public trust in the state. When the government officials err in either direction, then we have misalignment.

Returning to the question of delegation, the formal, legal delegation between the MEC and the HoD is framed by the constitutional and legislative requirement to ensure that all children in the province have a school place. In the RISE framework, this legislative orientation is essentially about access. In contrast, while the political party may make electoral promises around other orientations, the legislation clearly prioritises universal enrolment.

In contrast to the legislative mandate, the Annual Reports and Strategic plans signal a very wide range of priorities and, by extension, delegations from the MEC to the HoD. This was addressed extensively in the previous section.

But to get at what are the actual or lived priorities (objective of the political relationship) between the MEC and the HoD, it is probably best to reference the departmental press releases and newspaper articles. There are a number of themes in these including:

1. School violence
2. Unplaced learners, school admissions and backlogs
3. Racism in former Afrikaans public and independent schools (Randfontein, Curro)
4. Irregular tenders, corruption and appointment of unqualified candidates
5. Introduction of new technology, technology designed schools, tablets and smartboards
6. Succession battles within the political parties

So, what does this suggest in terms of the orientations in the Compact? Issues of unplaced learners, school admissions and waiting lists are a likely indicator that access remains a priority. Similarly, the frequent press releases associated with conflict with Afrikaans schools signal the continued priority of addressing residual racism remains on the agenda. The frequent reference to ICT tender irregularities, irregularities with the PPE procurement, and allegations of the appointment of unqualified applicants to senior positions, suggest that patronage, special interest and careerism may also feature in the Compact. What is missing are references to basic education and low levels of learning in the early grade, and the impact that these are having on the higher grades. While they may feature in the strategic plans and internal discussions between the MEC and the HoD, it is certainly not evident in the public discourse.

Districts

RISE diagnostic management (district) analysis engages with a long list of questions, including the following:

- What are the high-level targets for districts? How is alignment of the curriculum and learning level of students achieved at the district level?
- What are the districts most important responsibilities?
- Can they grant local discretion to schools/teachers? How do districts interpret EMIS information?
- How is school information used and shared between districts and schools?
- How do the districts work with schools around examinations?
- How do districts align interventions around assessment and exams?
- To what extent are districts focused on accounts vs. accounting for school leadership and teachers?
- How does the district work towards teacher professional status and supporting intrinsic motivation of teachers?
- What are the extrinsic motivators in career advancement and job security?
- How does the district facilitate internal coherence/quality of instructional materials?
- How does the district deal with external coherence between training and other design elements? Are all district posts filled?
- Do they have sufficient funding for transport to schools? Are they appropriately qualified?
- To what extent was patronage and special interests key to district appointments?
- What are the job functions of the district staff?
- What explains the failure of multiple MECs' attempts to pivot district offices from compliance to support?⁵
- There is a continued lack of trust on the part of schools, restrict visits to classroom by district officials. Why?
- Support for schools is perceived as very weak? Why?

This section of the Diagnostic focuses on the district-school interaction around improving learning. Using the principal-agent theory, the five features framework, the orientation categories and the additional concepts, we explore the areas of misalignments and incoherence within space in the governance systems.

What policy documents say about the role of districts in learning improvement

⁵ The DBE Strategic Plan says: "The District model based on an activist administration advocating that district support staff spend more time supporting schools and less time in the office (80% support and 20% compliance)". We will check in the Annual Reports to see what data is available to track the degree to which this is achieved.

In terms of the South African Schools Act and the National Education Policy Act, 1996, education districts in South Africa have no original powers or functions prescribed by law, but rather operate as components of provincial departments in terms of national and provincial legislation. There is a recognition, however, that districts and district professional staff specifically, should play a catalytic role in ensuring improved learning as they are widely perceived as the key link between national policy from the Department of Basic Education and the head offices of the Provincial Departments of education and schools.

In the 2010s, there was a concerted effort to develop uniform framework for district organisation and staffing, and their delegated authority, roles and responsibilities. The education district policy was published in 2013 (Department of Basic Education, 2013) as *Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts*.

The core function of the district in the policy was identified as:

District offices are local hubs of the PEDs and provide vital lines of communication between the provincial head office and the education institutions in their care. Subject to provincial plans, their task is to work collaboratively with principals and educators in schools, with the vital assistance of circuit offices, to improve educational access, retention, give management and professional support, and help school achieve excellence in learning and teaching. (p. 11)

In terms of the policy, districts play four distinct roles: planning, support, oversight/accountability and public engagement.

What these key elements of the policy suggest is that districts are viewed not primarily as centres of professional development, but rather as the “line of communication” between the PDE head office and schools. In colloquial language, education districts were often described as little more than “post offices” through which information comes down from above and gets transmitted to schools. Even within the professional functions, the quote above clearly signals that improving learning is only one of many functions to be performed by the education district.

The National Development Plan Vision 2030 (2012) made explicit mention of the role of districts to provide targeted support to improve practices within schools.

Teaching in schools can be improved through targeted support by district offices. District offices should also ensure communication and information sharing between the education authorities and schools, and also between schools. (p. 303)

In 2016, the Deputy Minister of Education’s briefing to the National Council of Provinces education committee made the point that, in the National Development Plan Vision 2030, districts are responsible for providing “targeted support to improve practices within schools.” (See <https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/23313/>)

While the national policy prescribed the organisation and norms for district offices, the Gauteng Department elaborated on this in their own policy documents. From the perspective of the Gauteng Department of Education, the role of districts is to assist principals and school officials to “improve teaching and learning experiences in their schools”. The district is to do this by visiting schools, monitoring school progress, observing classrooms, offering consulting services and providing feedback. There is also a recognition that districts play a key role in ensuring peace, order and cordial relationships. (Gauteng Department of Education, 2022)

In summary then, the district delegation emerges, not in legislation, but in policy. The policy mandate is sufficiently important to be highlighted in the National Development Plan. Although improving learning is clearly seen as an important role of education districts, a number of other, and arguably equally important, roles have been identified in the policy discourse both at national and provincial levels. The policy discourse does signal that one of its major functions is to act as a conduit of information that would flow downward from national and provincial departments through the district offices to schools.

What activities has the Department of Education initiated to support district improvement

From within the Department of Basic Education (national), the District Coordination Monitoring and Support (DCMS) HEDCOM Subcommittee has initiated a range of interventions. At the core of these initiatives is the institutionalisation of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for district offices. During the past few years, this subcommittee has focused on the management of the pandemic and curriculum management, psychological support and Check Health systems.

The other focus has been on helping district offices in the improvement of their teacher development practices, through monitoring and supporting district improvement plans. The subcommittee has also initiated the use of a competency assessment for district managers and a mentoring project. The committee is aware of, and has been monitoring, high vacancy rates in district offices. The national Department also runs an annual district awards process (Department of Basic Education, 2021).

Why Districts are not working

The evidence from government documents and secondary literature surfaces a range of issues that explain the misalignment between the intentions of educational districts in improving school learning and the realities of their operation. The first relates to the priority given to districts by the PDE head offices as conveyors of policy mandates, rather than as service providers, based on the needs of schools. The second relates to the range and complexities of tasks demanded of district staff. The third relates to chronic resource constraints, particularly those related to vacant posts. The fourth problem relates to the weaknesses of the existing professional staff

currently employed in key posts. Finally, there is a lack of trust in relationships between schools and district offices, particularly around accountability issues.

1. Work of the district driven by Provincial Head Office and National Department of Basic Education priorities

In one of the first major studies of the role of districts in the post 1994 period, Narsee (2007) found that, despite the dominant discourse of the role of education districts as places to support schools, districts play a role in “policy transmission, policy compliance” and what she referred to as “policy alleviation” (i.e. the efforts on the part of the district officials to “soften” the hard edges of the effects of difficult-to-implement policy on schools). She found that the work programmes of districts are largely set by the provincial head office, rather than by the learning improvement needs of schools.⁶ Even when district explicitly provide “support” to schools, this is primarily geared towards government’s intended policies.

The evidence since this groundbreaking study confirms that this pattern continues. When district subject advisors were interviewed in the NECT district study (2021), a large proportion reported spending time on a range of activities unrelated to improving learning, especially in unplanned provincial department meetings related to policy implementation. Many interviewed and surveyed Subject Advisors complained that their school visits are compromised when they are asked to attend meetings or training workshops on new programmes, without adequate warning. Calendar and schedule clashes reportedly occur and district and provincial priorities often trump planned school visits. Conflicting schedules are exacerbated by the large number of programmes that some districts are reportedly implementing simultaneously.

2. Existing staff allocated to other work: firefighting, admissions, examination monitoring, promotion schedules, checking on ATPs, school surveys.

Among the key findings of the NECT district study (2021) is the uneven implementation of the subject advisor provisioning model resulting in some provinces being more severely affected than others; as well as the huge need for advisors to be capacitated with requisite ICT skills for supporting teachers. The NECT study (2021) reported that 11% of advisors listed the monitoring of examinations as one of the top three tasks that take up the majority of their working hours. This is particularly significant as there are at least two examination periods per year, the first for trials and the second for the final Grade 12 examinations. Subject advisors also reported that they were often responsible for other policy monitoring, such as learner grade progression and promotion, and school functionality assessment. While not reported in this study, anecdotal evidence suggests that subject advisors are often involved in the placement of unplaced learners in the first month of the school year.

⁶ This work is based on case studies and caution needs to be used in generalising for the system as a whole.

3. Insufficient number of core staff specifically allocated to areas of improvement. This occurs despite norms and standards that have been developed for districts

The 2018 Amended Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of the Education Districts prescribed the minimum staffing norms for district professionals involved in curriculum support. While there are a number of factors that would determine the ratio of professional curriculum support staff per school, the overall guideline is that no subject advisor should have more than 80 schools to supervise (NECT, 2021). For a subject advisor responsible for Home Language early grade reading, this would more often than not translate into supervision of 480 teachers (assuming an average of six teachers per school for Grades 1-3).

The study of the workloads of general education and training band (GET) Mathematics advisors and GET English First Additional Language advisors showed that, of the 608 advisors surveyed, roughly half reported supporting around a 100 schools (49% or 300) each, and almost 30% reported supporting more than 201 schools.

Although the NECT district report was the most comprehensive review of district capacity, an earlier report flagged the quality of the few professional staff employed in the district, and a lack of resources to carry out their duties. The Human Resource Council of South African Report (2014) noted:

The state of the districts is characterized by: A complement of qualified and experienced district officials, although it is not entirely clear how competent and committed they are; District programmes and cultures that are province-driven, rather than responsive to school needs; Weak support and monitoring of the schools, mainly due to under-resourcing and serious understaffing; A lack of basic resources such as transport and communication facilities; Absence of a culture of data utilization for decision-making and improvement. (p. 7)

4. Existing staff do not have the experience or the expertise to really do the task of helping to do the improvement work.

While the evidence of professional staff who lack the necessary experience and expertise is fairly widespread, there is evidence that part of the problem may also be related to corruption and patronage. The Investigation into the Selling of Posts (DBE, 2016) found that “[i]n some cases, there appears to be collusion between union officials and district managers.” The same report pointed to inconsistencies in the process of appointing professionals.

Where Districts work strictly according to regulated procedures and where their managerial and administrative staff members are persistent and consistent in carrying out their duties in accordance with a coherent system, the Teacher Unions in those areas are held in check and procedures and decisions are led by the Department. Two examples

of this are to be found in the Northern Cape and the Free State. Where there is a balance of power between SADTU and other Unions, such as in the Western Cape, neither Union can behave as SADTU does in North West, Eastern Cape, KZN or Limpopo. So the Department of Education is effectively in control of education of one-third of South Africa's provinces. In other words, where authority is weak, inefficient and dilatory, teacher unions move into the available spaces and determine policies, priorities and appointments achieving undue influence over matters which primarily should be the responsibility of the Department (p. 17-18).

In other words, the Investigation into the Selling of Posts found that one of the teacher unions was effectively in control of appointed process, including appointments at district office level.

5. Lack of trust between schools and district officials. Teachers and their unions explicitly restrict district officials from access to the classrooms.

The origins of distrust between teachers and district officials can be traced back to the 1970s and 1980s, when the apartheid state used inspectors, and to a lesser extent subject advisors, to identify teachers who were aligned to the liberation movement or were leaders of the emerging teacher union movement. That said, the deep distrust has continued decades after the end of apartheid.⁷ Researchers have provided qualitative evidence of continued tensions between teachers and district officials. Bantwini's (2014 and 2015) study of the relationship between primary school natural science teachers and their district staff reveals the deep animosity teachers feel towards district officials. As teachers and district officials observed:

That kind of an attitude, you know, has never changed that much, though at times they pretend... But still, in the back of their mind, they still think that you are their boss, their superior; you are the government, whatever. You are not on their side; rather, you are on a witch hunt and you just want to see where they miss it (do a wrong thing). That kind of attitude is still there in the minds of most of our teachers, which is another challenge that blocks the effectiveness of the support that we give. (Mr Xman, district official)

There are no workshops for science content knowledge. The district does not ask us if what the challenges are. They decide on their own without even consulting us. (Mrs Hlathi, science teacher)

I don't want to lie, classroom follow-up by the EDOs (education district officials) is completely not there ...In the case of natural science...who is responsible for the area, I don't even know. (Mrs Sony, science teacher)

⁷ To what extent is this fueled by teacher union's need to be in charge of key processes of employment and promotion and to avoid accountability and to what extent is it a real hangover from the past? Of course, the other factor is that many subject advisors do not have the capacity to assist teachers and so they slip into compliance monitoring, which just consumes time and is of little assistance improving the technical core.

Other qualitative studies largely confirm these insights for teachers and managers (see Dambuza, 2015; Kadenge, 2021; Maliehe, 2020; Mavuso & Moyo, 2015 and Nel et al, 2016 and Rasobtsa, 2017).

A slightly different set of dynamics that highlight the relationship between communities and schools and district officials has been highlighted. An anthropologist, Zolani Ngwane (2001), did ethnographic research in Cancele village in Mount Frere in the rural Eastern Cape Province on how generational conflicts since the 1970s have impacted upon levels of distrust between teachers and traditional authorities. Ngwane observes that, during much of the 20th century in many parts of rural South Africa, male elders not only exercised control over rural households through the access to migrant labor wage income, but they also exercised some degree of power over the relationship between the school and traditional initiation rites. By the early 2000s, however, this male elder authority had been undermined by growing retrenchments from the mines and structural unemployment. In these changed circumstances, male elders, as well as traditional authorities, became increasingly distrustful of younger teachers who were seen to educate their sons and daughters in ways that alienated them from ‘traditional values’, thereby undermining traditional authority. A similar attitude was held towards education officials who were seen to be part of this school-based socialisation process that alienated learners from their ‘traditional culture’. It would seem that, while there is significant research on the ‘trust-deficit’ between teachers and district officials in urban settings, less is known about rural schools.

So, what is revealed about the district school relationship using the Diagnostic tool? The overarching question is about the misalignment or incoherence between district office staff and schools (and teachers) in system-wide improvement of learning. More specifically, to what extent do the five features in the diagnostic framework explain misalignment?

The start of the analysis is not with delegation but with the legal framework. In terms of the South African governance structure, the districts do not have original powers and have no juristic person status, but are, instead, administrative extensions of the provincial department of education. At best, the district is a deconcentrated structure designed to deliver the provincial government mandate. Given that the schools are juristic persons in terms of South African law, the principal-agent relationship is really between the provincial education department as principal and the school as agent. In technical legal terms, the two structures have equal status. The district, then, has no identifiable legal status on its own, but gains its authority by virtue of being a structure of provincial government. This has significant implications for how the district conceives of itself and how accountability works. It is not a service provider of the schools to enhance the work of teaching and learning in schools, or the friend of the teacher, but is instead a vehicle through which the national and provincial department mandate is communicated.

What is the ‘orientation’ of the district mandate or delegation? While the slogan of providing ‘support’ to schools is repeated with each five-year administration (associated with new MECs), the de facto delegation is linked closely to (1) delivering on new policy and (2) routine administration. In some instances, the delivery may be linked to improving learning, but in the

absence of proper planning, policy is often superficial and often symbolic, a form of policy signaling. The administrative or bureaucratic system demands cannot be underestimated. To maintain control, the district staff expend considerable time and resources on routine tasks, such as assisting children to get admitted in Grade 1 and 8, monitoring examinations and transmitting and collecting information.

Possibly the most important consideration related to the principal-agent relationship is the question of finance and resources. Although the Gauteng province is clearly not the most under-resourced province from the perspective of professional staff in the district office, the norms and standards for district staffing would make it very difficult for any of the Gauteng district offices to provide substantial and impactful one-on-one support.

And while the Data Driven District (a project that is being rolled out across the country) is designed to improve the analytic capability of district staff, there is little evidence that careful consideration is given to data analysis in the planning of support to schools. The obvious exception is the Grade 12 senior certificate exams. In this case, the pass rate is tracked and the district both holds schools accountable for improvements and declines, while itself being held accountable by the head office.

In terms of support and motivation, the national Department of Basic Education reports on many different interventions designed to support districts so they can support schools. Many are small-scale pilots, with little evidence of impact on schools. And while the rhetoric of 'support' or 'capacity building' of the schools by the districts is routinely repeated, schools seldom experience the districts in this way. The academic case studies provide evidence of this. There is also little evidence that any of the capacity building has an impact on improving the technical core.

While the districts are not really helping improve learning at the technical core, they are also not simply mimicking the structures or activities of an effective state. The principal-agent relationship (management and schools) is best understood as doing the business of maintaining order and stability. This explains why the valuable time of early grade reading professionals gets utilised in monitoring Grade 12 examinations, or collecting routine information. The failure to build trust between the district office and the school after the end of apartheid can be understood, not as institutional misalignment, but throwing into sharp relief the real function of the district as an institution used for the maintenance of order and stability, rather than for learner improvement.

Voice and Choice⁸

The starting point of an analysis of voice is to understand the unique relationship between recipients of services (i.e., learners) and, by extension, their parents (broadly conceived) as the principal in the relationship; and the providers of the services, the teachers and school leaders as their agents. Specifically, the understanding is of what ways students and parents can exercise their voice to ensure the accountability and responsiveness of schools and teachers.

When we begin the analysis of the principal-agent in relationship in relation to voice, we begin by considering the formal or *de jure* framework. In the South African context, we need to map the legislative provisions of voice, as it has substantial bearing on the limits and possibilities for agency and accountability.

The single most significant piece of legislation in South African education is the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996. The first clue to understanding how the legislation would impact on voice can be found in SASA Section 15, which explicitly states that public schools are juristic persons. As such, in the South African context, the 24,000 public schools each have legal status in their own right. Amongst other things, they can enter into legally binding contracts. So, who within the school is a custodian of this juristic power? In terms of SASA's Section 23, the School Governing Body, which comprises a majority of parents of students in the school, has the power. Once every three years, the legislation requires school-based parent elections, where parents are elected to serve on the highest decision-making body in the school.⁹

To get at the question of the orientation of this particular form of voice, we need to see what functions the legislation allocates to both the School Governing Body and the parents who serve on it as the majority of members. Many of the powers prescribed in the legislation are limited by other national and provincial legislation, regulation and policy, such as the right to develop school admissions policy, school religious policy, school language policy and school code of conduct for students including the suspension for serious misconduct. Nonetheless, SASA's Sections 20 and 21 provide significant decision-making authority to this body. Specifically, SASA's

⁸ In our usage of the concept of choice we are cognisant of the fact that this term can be very deceptive when it comes to the schooling options available to parents from different socio-economic groups and geographically locations. For instance, for urban middle class parents, the choice of schools for their children may be analogous to 'shopping' for the best product that they can afford – and what they can afford is typically of a decent standard. This is certainly not the case for poorer rural households, where the options are considerably more constrained. In fact, it may be more appropriate to use the concept of 'agency' to signal that, for poorer households, the room to manoeuvre can be extremely limited - but there may still be possibilities for accessing somewhat better schools within this constrained universe of options. See the discussion by Richard below on the emergence of 'quasi-markets' for selecting schools amongst the better-off sections the population.

⁹ There is another thorny issue of whether the parent representatives as effective agents of the broader body of parents]

Section 20 grants the governing body the right to select or choose school managers, teachers and all other non-teaching staff to be employed in the school. It also grants them the right to supplement public sector employee salaries. Although the school or governing body is ultimately not the employer of teachers who are actually paid and employed by the State, the legislation makes it clear that the governing body, and parents in particular, have a central role in determining who is to be employed (but not to fire) in teaching posts at the school. In practice, principals often guide parents in decision making.

More broadly than the School Governing Body, parents directly have the right to levy on themselves compulsory school fees. Although this originally applied to all public schools, subsequent amendments to the legislation restricted this right to the two 'least poor' 40% of schools only (with the rest officially designated as "no fee schools"). In terms of this legislation, parents at an annual general meeting can set compulsory and legally binding school fees. There is, however, an automatic requirement that, given that these are public schools, any student whose parent cannot pay, is entitled to either a full or partial exemption from payment of these parent determined fees.

The combination of the circumscribed powers over key policy areas such as language policy, the role in selecting professional staff and setting compulsory fees and the *de jure* delegations grant significant real voice to parents directly or via their election of parent representatives who sit on the School Governing Body. How does finance work in this particular principal-agent relationship? Given the extreme inequalities of income in South Africa – even between non-poor cohorts – the answer is dependent on whether it is a 'poor' or 'less poor' public school. In the former, parents have very limited financial authority vis-a-vis teachers and schools as agents. In contrast, in the 'less poor' schools, parent fees can be, and are used, to hire additional teaching staff and supplement remuneration of teachers employed by the State. Thus, for these schools, the financial provisions potentially strengthen the hand of parents as principal in this aspect of the relationship.¹⁰

Insights into how the principal agent relationship actually works out in practice become evident when we examine how information works (or fails to work). While all parents can gather information from their children about the school experience, given the absence of current and reliable information on learning, save for the high stakes exit exams in Grade 12, parents and their elected governors have very little insight into the technical core and learning outcomes associated with it.

Thus, in the absence of real information on learning outcomes, voice has, in some instances, been oriented to other foci. Access and attainment are, however, seldom a priority for parents, both at the individual parent level or in its collective form on the governing body. Parents of children

¹⁰ Perhaps we need to think about 'market relations' as relations of accountability ("the customer is always right") vs public financial relations that rely on general taxation and where lines of accountability are longer and more complex ("no taxation without representation")

already enrolled at the school have a vested interest in restricting the further opening of access (in order to preserve or improve real or perceived learning outcomes). In contrast, many of the main school legal cases centred around school governing bodies revealing the extent of efforts to restrict access. This is evident in the case law from Matukane (1996), Mikro Primary (2005), Hoerskool Ermelo (2009) and Rivonia Primary (2013).

If learning and access are not the primary orientation in the principal-agent relationship, what is? The answer is likely to be a combination of alignment for socialisation and alignment for other purposes such as patronage and special interests. Again, in the absence of adequate evidence it is very difficult to gauge the extent of these problems.

There is an apparent contradiction at the centre of the legislation that allocates voice to parents, specifically with reference to learning. On the one hand, the SASA grants parents the right to select the teachers and management for their school through the majority of members on the school governing body. They are given the right to determine the language policy of the school. As we have seen, they also have the right to levy compulsory school fees which could be used to hire additional teachers and supplement the salaries of teacher employed the public service. On the other hand, the legislation draws a hard line between governance and management (Sections 16 and 16A). In these Sections, it makes it clear that the principal and staff, under the mandate of the national and provincial department, have exclusive responsibility for curriculum, assessment and training related to improved teaching methods. On the first two, the national department has exclusive authority. While policy provides guidance on improving these, existing institutional norms largely determine daily classroom teaching practices.

When we apply the second and third features of the schema, we note that there is clearly a strong financial relationship in Voice between the principal (parents) and agent (teachers), in that parents have the right to levy fees with which they can hire additional teachers and supplement the income of government contract teachers.¹¹ However, this financial contribution is insulated against parents using financial leverage to impact upon improved learning. But the key issue in the features analysis is the absence of information on learning.¹² Given the limited information that parents have as members of SGBs about learning outcomes, parent voice is muted as a pathway to improved learning outcomes.

When we consider the *de facto* situation related to parent voice, a few dynamics surface. First, in order to address concerns about possible exclusion, subsequent to the original formulation

¹¹ Again this only applies in the wealthier public schools.

¹² All schools do internal exams and provide reports, and in middle-class schools parents engage with teachers on these reports both formally through structured events, and informally when individual parents call up teachers or the principal, or when their children bring home poor exams results and test scores. Most provinces now run one or other form of common exams, and there is a need to investigate to what extent that happens in Gauteng. We do note that the teacher union has pushed back against this particular form of assessment.

that gave all schools the right to levy fees, albeit with conditions to ensure that fees do not become prohibitive, government restricted schools that could levy fees to the top 40% of what is referred to as the 'least poor' public schools. While all schools continue to have the right to determine language policy and select educators, parents at 'poorer schools' no longer have the right to levy fees. They can, however, supplement school income in other ways, but generally these additional funds are quite limited.

The other *de facto* limitation relates to who participates in school governing body elections. Although the legislation prescribes mandatory capacity-building of newly elected parent governors, even in the best resourced schools, anecdotal evidence suggests that the school principal more often than not overdetermines governing body decisions. Evidence suggests that this is particularly true in the 60% 'poorer schools'. More recently, it has emerged that some school governing bodies are part of the wider societal phenomenon referred to as 'state capture'. In some cases, school principals and local branches of teacher unions have been accused of 'hijacking' school governing bodies and using undue influence to appoint teachers and school managers.

Although we have little evidence to quantify how widespread these practices are, and the degree to which this is part of the wider phenomenon of 'state capture', some of our interviewees were critical of the state's failure to reign in unions deemed to be responsible for promoting 'special interests' within the education sector. For instance, Angus (former Chief Director) spoke about the potentially obstructive role of some SADTU unionists and alluded to anecdotal reports about patronage networks within the Tripartite Alliance. He concluded that 'special interests' and patronage adversely impacted on educational priorities and objectives, and that this was not addressed by government, because this could potentially undermine the Tripartite Alliance.

Jo: ... There are stories that circulate around the unions. And I want to make it clear that it's solely anecdotal. Oftentimes, people refer to the fact that there was this lack of political will, because the Department and the politicians were afraid of making enemies of the unions which were powerful.

Interviewer: So, would you say I suggest, at least for at some point, the department was captured by special interests that had a disproportionate authority in decision making,

Jo: Oh definitely. The unwillingness to intervene may have been driven or motivated by the fact that there was an unwillingness to agonize teacher unions. And that was, for me, very, very strange, because I would have thought that the strongest driver should always have been the people on the ground, the communities, and in this case their needs....

Interviewer: So what you're suggesting is [during] those first administrations, there were a specific set of circumstances that made it difficult to focus on improving township schools. And it wasn't a financial issue, and it wasn't an information system. It was instead special interests that came to play a disproportionate power in the first and second administrations.

Jo: I think that there was an early realization from the ANC that they needed to take the workers along with him. And the Alliance that we entered into with COSATU since the early 90s, that Alliance, gave a sort of special status to unions. But I think education it is more complex than your ordinary factory floor environment. And in that regard, the guys [i.e., the unionized teachers] who have benefited have been afforded more respect than they deserve, and even possibly treated with kid gloves, when they should not have been treated with kid gloves out of fear of a bigger picture, set of consequences unfolding.

In our interview with Pamela, however, we got a very different perspective on the teacher unions. In fact, Pamela indicated that she had developed a mutually supportive relationship with SADTU.

Look, by and large, we run with the policy directives of our Labor Relations Council agreements and systems on the ground. What I can say is that we have a very good relationship with our social partners, the unions in the District. I have quarterly meetings with them where we all agree that the interest of the District is on quality, performance and having quality teachers in the classroom. So, I must say that the unions are quite supportive in that particular space...

In sum then, while the legislation/formal delegation appears to have allocated substantial real authority to parents, providing them with real voice in decision making related to improving learning, the internal contradiction in the legislation and the de facto reality makes this more symbolic than substantive. The anecdotal account of the undue influence of trade unions that we referred to above is but one instance in which the voice and agency of parents, teachers and learners can, under certain circumstances, become diluted or undermined by ‘special interests’ or bureaucratic indifference.

Choice

With the exception of one paper by CDE (Bernstein, 2012), school choice has never been a prominent part of the policy debate and has not found its way into actual government policy. That said, South Africa has developed an unintended version of choice (see Woolman and Fleisch, 2006). The combination of the South African constitution, the South African Schools Act, the National Education Policy, and provisions of the Employment of Educators Act, when read together, have the unintended consequence of creating the space for limited, yet significant, school choice.

This situation is largely the outcome of the post-1994 South African constitution, which prohibited unfair discrimination and endorsed freedom of movement and residence. It can be assumed that, given the history of residential segregation under apartheid, any form of ‘hard zoning’ that restricted children from one area from seeking access to a school in another would be viewed as conflicting with the provisions of the constitution. Although various efforts have been made to regulate admissions through the National Education Policy Act and the most recent

admission regulations, these regulations do not preclude parents from applying to the public school of choice. In fact, the original formulation of the regulations used the phrase “coordinate parental preferences”. The regulations described the policy as follows “a learner who lives outside the feeder zone is not precluded from seeking admission at whichever school he or she chooses” (Admission Policy, 1998 and amendments). Although learners outside the school zones are not guaranteed access, schools that are not full of learners from the immediate locality would be open to children from other parts.

The South African Schools Act, by granting school governing bodies the right to levy compulsory school fees, set up an incentive to ensure as many full fee-paying learners would be admitted as possible. From a teacher’s perspective and the post establishment models (formerly referred to as the Morkel Model), because the funding follows the enrolled learners, there is an underlying incentive to ensure that as many learners as possible are enrolled. However, for the unintended South African choice experiment to be correctly referred to as a choice system, three conditions would need to be met. First, the system would require multiple providers of goods of variable type and quality; second, information on the goods would need to be widely available; and third, price variation would need to exist in response to demand. The first condition is certainly met in urban centres, but would not apply in rural areas where the cost of transport would be prohibitive. On the second, while information is relatively widely available about the performance of secondary schools in the national secondary certificate examinations, parents have to rely on proxies for information on quality at the primary school level. At least, for the 40% of least poor schools, there is considerable price variability. That said, the legislation does attempt to take the price issues out of the equation as all schools that charge fees are required to inform parents about eligibility for full and partial fee exceptions. So, what is the actual extent of this unintended experiment in school choice?

Possibly the best illustration comes from the work of De Kadt et al (2014). Making use of data from a longitudinal panel study of 1428 children, the paper found that a third of all children in the study traveled more than three kilometres one-way to school, and 60% attended school outside the suburb in which they lived. Only 18% attended the nearest school. The data suggested, at least for children who live in Soweto, Johannesburg, that there is a high level of school choice and that parents are making substantial investment choices in pursuit of higher quality education for their children. Since the publication of this study, there have been a number of new studies that have largely confirmed the original findings (see for example Hunter 2015a; Hunter 2015b; Hill 2016; Hunter 2017; and McKay, 2019).

To what extent could these results be generalised? Given that roughly half of South Africans lives in urban areas, and given an unemployment rate of around 40%, it is likely that choice is restricted to children in families living in urban centres, who have at least one person in the household that is formally employed. In other words, choice while widespread, is limited. Over the last two decades there has been a large shift in learners from rural to urban areas – so much so that many rural schools are being closed down. It’s not quite true that choice is limited to urban residents.

It's also the case that households are organised across provincial boundaries (i.e., there continues to be circular migration), so many rural households send their children to urban centres for education while remaining primarily rural.

When it comes to the question of the kind of information available to parents to enable them to make informed decisions and choices, two questions arise: 1) Do standardised exams provide regular, reliable, relevant information on learning? 2) Beyond standardised exams, do families get other accounts of whether their child is learning? The answer is no to both questions. Although the information about internal examinations is limited, one study (Lam et al 2011) suggested that school reports, and by extension grade progression/repetition, are not a reliable indicator of actual learning. Sources of reliable learning information (PIRLS and TIMSS) are not available at school levels. Parents are thus forced to make decisions based on proxy indicators, such as school fees and the school infrastructure. How closely these two indicators correlate with learning is unknown.

Given the limitations on access to learning information, what can be said about choice and parents' agency with respect to school enrolment decisions? First, despite the absence of official policy, internal policies are aligned to create an unintended experiment with choice. The school 'market' is, however, restricted to employed parents who live in urban areas where they are likely to be able to access multiple education suppliers. While a substantial proportion of the population can and do make use of choice, in the absence of reliable information, it is difficult to assess the extent to which choice actually drives improvement in the practices of teachers as agents. There is one final point that may be useful to consider emerging out of an analysis of agency/choice. Although we have little evidence that choice is driving improvement in systems of education, particularly improvement in the technical core at underperforming schools, it is possible that choice may be driving improved learning for those who have the resources to access 'better' schools.

In the following section, we discuss the responses of interviewees to issues of voice and choice in relation to efforts to access improved learning opportunities.

Interviewee perspectives on voice and choice:

'Officials come and give us a basic lecture thinking that we are beginners': Reflections by leaders of school governing body associations on the obstacles to voice

In their interviews, Therina and Richard, who are both heads of school governing body associations, made several insightful observations on issues relating to voice and choice. For instance, Therina noted that, although South African law establishes a legally binding commitment to meaningfully engage with school governing body associations, government officials typically were not very enthusiastic about collaborating with these institutions, or treating them as partners. Therina also noted that the South African Schools Act (SASA) requires a partnership between parents and the state, yet she found that high-level government officials were generally skeptical of the role of parents and parents associations, thereby limiting the

exercise of voice. Therina then proceeded to discuss the complexities of SASA's efforts to 'empower' parents through the election of the school governing bodies.

Interviewer: *I'd like to talk to you about is the perspective of parents from your own experiences working in an organisation that represents school governors who are elected by parents. What in your view, in the South African context, do parents want from schools in the school system?*

Therina: *Well, that's a tricky question. Because in the South African context, the answer would be a very diverse answer because different communities are better informed about what the opportunities are. In other words, under your framework, where they do have formal opportunity to voice. The majority of the communities are not a 100% familiar with these opportunities, with their rights, to participate, to have their voice expressed.... The feeling is that parents are not aware that they can get involved and are hence not involved. When we had the beginnings of the South African Schools Act a long time ago, pre 96 - when we had the policy papers, the white papers – the idea was that communities would partner with education departments in a participative process and structure, but this has failed. So, there was provision in law formally for structures as everybody is theoretically supposed to know. The school governing bodies are a third-tier election level in our country, after municipalities. Parents are supposed to participate in elections of SGBs, they need to be taught about it, told about it, and encouraged to vote. You get different responses. You get some schools where there is a total disinterest by the parents. They say that the better schools are doing such a good job that we don't actually want to even bother to go to the meeting to elect. In other schools, the SGB is seen as the political platform, and so you get a lot of political motivation to go and elect. For what end, we're not really sure, because the school governing bodies can only do what the South African Schools Act says they can do, and it's not really to advance any particular agenda really that the actual schools face. So the long answer to that is, the answer is diverse. There is a structure for parents participation, a formal structure, it's an electoral process, and it's quite rigidly controlled. But it's not taken seriously in all communities. And in some communities, it gets hijacked for different purposes, not necessarily the best interest of that school community. So, the community's voice in the school has been undermined. And I think we need to get back to the communities ownership in schools.*

Interviewer: *... Does the department allow for voice? I mean, we've got it in the legislation, but at an implementation level, to what extent does the department actually allow for voice in the governance of schools? And you've talked about this variability. Can you talk more about what your sense of the responsiveness of the department to allowing parent governance of the school*

Therina: *This is a very touchy topic right now. The law prescribes it. The law does not sufficiently prescribe that the education department must listen to the voice of the parents. Or, in our case, the school governing body associations. We are associations that*

represent parent bodies, okay. And we have a structure, theoretically called the National Consultative Forum. And then it's supposed to be replicated in the provinces and provincial consultative forums, where school governing body associations bring issues, we table issues, which then are responded to by senior managers in the department. And it's supposed to be chaired at national level by the Director General and then in the provinces by the head of departments, that's what's supposed to happen. It happens to a greater or lesser degree in most provinces, but not all. And at national, it does happen theoretically once a quarter. It's our meeting tomorrow. However, the Director General has not chaired it for a very long time. **But the structure is not stated in law that it is a compulsory consultative structure. It was talked about at the very beginning of SASA, and then it was written out of the law.** So the law says the department must consult with the with the parties in the ELRC. But SGB associations are not in the ELRC. Okay, they were and they were pushed, out long ago. So there is no official recognition of consultation in NEPA. It specifies ELRC parties, and some kind of national structure. But we don't know what they're talking about. It can't be the National Education Collaborative Trust, because that's a totally different animal, but they do listen to that animal a lot [laughs]. But the parents associations, we have the meeting once a quarter, they do happen. They're chaired by a director, but not by the director general. And we do table issues. But because the officials who come don't have authority, or don't actually understand that we know a lot, we know a lot, and we are bringing unresolved matters. So please don't come and give us a PowerPoint on the history of some or other project. We know it. We want to know how it's actually functioning right now and where we're going tomorrow. But the officials come and give us a basic lecture thinking that we are beginners, or ignorant or, I don't know who they think we are. But we don't get answers, and there's no progress. So we have consultation, but it doesn't take us any way. So it's not an accountable structure. And we're going to we're going to fight that issue tomorrow. We've drafted something already ...

Interviewer: If I'm hearing you correctly, what you're saying is there's a legislative framework that's clear, but in terms of whether the government pays attention to the School Governing Body when they raise issues, the law doesn't prescribe it. And where you do have formal processes, people who come are generally low-level people, and they don't necessarily want to listen, they tend to want to lecture rather than listen.

Therina: Our view is that they're not briefed about who the audience is, and why are we there. So, they don't come appropriately prepared...

'Hunting for schools': Consuming education and exercising choice

In her interview, Therina also discussed how high-demand schools, and the strategies that parents deploy to access such schools, provide compelling evidence of the emergence of a 'quasi-market' in the school system (also see Richard below). Therina also elaborated on the distinction between low and high demand schools and the implications of this for choice.

Interviewer: *Earlier, you talked about access. To what extent are parents concerned about learning quality?*

Therina: *It's their top concern. Independent schools, and I'm talking across the races and across economic structures, except the very poorest, who are just so disenfranchised that they actually can't even think about accessing what they ought to be able to access. So, I'm leaving out the most disempowered people. But even poor people want quality education for their child, and they are actually quite smart about trying to find it. And in other provinces, except Gauteng, they seek out quality. Sometimes it's in the best of the township schools. And they seek it out...*

So you've got a high demand schools in certain areas. And those schools tend to admit more than they can possibly manage. And that's another issue. That's a finance issue as the principal gets paid more if there are more kids in the school, up to a point. It's not a good thing. But all levels are seeking quality. So, for some, they don't go out of the township. They stay in the township schools, but they're looking for the best. For middle class, empowered people, they would like to be in the public sector, and they are pushing the schools that have got known quality. And that presents a problem across the country in terms of admission policy, and how constitutionally correct our schools are when they administer their admission policies. And we have a problem because we have a national admission policy, which is not applied and is in review, but just never seems to come out. We've never seen another draft as a national admissions policy. And then provinces because of their concurrent powers have their own admission policies, with Gauteng having its own very different policy, which I think is bordering on being unconstitutional and in contravention of SASA. But that's a point that would have to go to law. And we're not going there with that. I think it's not a bad thing. It's actually making sure that schools must admit children, and I'm not so against it. I just think it needs to be legalized, [the MEC] needs to get his policy in line and national needs to come up with a proper policy that's applicable across the board.

Like Therina, Richard discussed the emergence of an informal market for schools and highlighted parents' concerted efforts to get their children into the best possible schools. Richard's account of this 'quasi-market' substantiated the desktop review's findings about the exercise of choice.

Interviewer: *So [parents] are looking for kind of education that's going to lead to post-secondary education. So, how do parents get to know specifically about the matric results of a school, and how good the school would be at providing opportunities for their children to succeed?*

Richard: *So, in hunting for schools, we've got two things. Number one, your feeder zone is where you are situated. And you don't have much choice outside of your feeder zone. So, the choice comes on more granular level between two schools that are very close to each other, as far as location, and possibly demographic mix. My experience is that people talk*

about this informally in their networks. So, during the early childhood stages, people say, "Which is a good school in my area. If I move, which school should I move close to?" So, parents have a good understanding that they want something good for the kids... Parents want their kids to go to the best possible school that they can, and there is an understanding of decay or failure in state-run institutions. So, where the public school structure works, it is known. And schools do a lot of marketing. They have open days and parents talk. So, there's the social network where a parent says, 'I had a great experience at this school.' Parents talk about the principal and the leadership at school. They want to know, how good is that principal, how good is that school, and they share the details. I think something else that comes out has to do with public schools and funding. Quintile four and five school fees in Gauteng can be quite steep. There's a social contract that says, 'I'm a consumer as well. I'm not just complying with compulsory schooling.' The state gives x rand to the school, and the parents gives x times 10 to the school. 'So they are very invested and make demands.

Interviewer: *So, parents are clearly acting as informed consumers, particularly when it comes to schools where the fee structures is are quite high.*

Richard: *Yeah, I would say consumerism is a risk to the education sector. Because the school knows what's best, as well from a pedagogical point of view. But there's this tension creeping up between School Governing Boards and the principal. The Board says, 'But the parents pay so much more, and the state pays so much, so why does the principal do what the government says and not what the parents say?' The same with the delivery of education. So, consumerism is definitely on the rise. It has a positive side as well as a risky side...*

Interviewer: *So, does the market actually work. Are bad schools essentially forced out or forced to change as a result of the kind of quasi-market*

Richard: *In a fee-paying school with higher fees, yes. The moment something explodes at a school, or something bad happens with the matric results at a school, there will be a Zonda Commission on what the heck happened [laughs]. Parents might take their kids elsewhere if they don't see change, and they don't see a willingness to accept responsibility by our government. In Gauteng, we are very blessed with the curse of our feeder zones [laughs], where people have choice. I personally live within eight school feeder zones. So, I can choose between eight primary schools and probably five or six high schools. So, if a school does not perform, I can exercise that option and move to another school without moving house. Not all people have that option. If you're in the rural areas, the closest school is the closest school, which we believe should be the best school because we should not have schools underperforming so far below the level of requirement that people want to move. All schools should be quality basic education.*

Interviewer: *What kinds of information are parents likely to use to make decisions about a school?*

Richard: *Very much the open days... I think for open days the big thing is the atmosphere, the feeling on campus. So, infrastructure plays a role, but the number one thing that I hear between parents is: 'We went to the school's open day, we met some of the staff and we listened to the principal. And the principal was amazing. Or the principal was underwhelming. So, the grounds can be great. The atmosphere can be good, the location is great. But leadership plays a major role. And not just the principal, but also the other staff and what they offer... And some schools have really strong academic programs. Some schools are struggling, but man, their choir goes overseas, they are known for the choir. So, arts and cultural activities are also important. Other schools have 16 rugby fields, so we have a Rugby School. So there's a niche [market]. In South Africa, at the moment, particularly in Gauteng, you've got choice not only within the public sector, but you've got a lot of independent schools; and the elite, public schools are still substantially less expensive than your private school competitors...*

Emerging Alignment and Coherence Themes

Using the 5x4 Diagnostic, with an emphasis on delegation, finance, information, support and motivation, we explored various relationships, including national/provincial planning, political/public servant compact, the role of district offices and voice/choice at the school level. What we have identified is seven misalignments and aspects of incoherency.

National/Province Planning

1. There are many government education planning documents, which cascade down through the system. However, there is a disjunction between policy goals and actual implementation plans, as well as insufficient information for monitoring and accountability purposes. In addition, there is often little prioritisation, as everything is urgent and important.
2. National funding formulas drive a very large percentage of the government education budgets. Although the goals might be stated, from a budget perspective there is little room to reallocate funding as expenditure patterns are overwhelmingly predetermined by formula driven norms.

Political Public Service Compact

3. There is a misalignment between provincial political leadership and their senior public sector departmental leadership counterparts. In the simplest form, political leadership has a five-year horizon aligned to the electoral cycles. During this period, political leadership tends to prioritise high profile initiatives with high media and community visibility. Provincial public sector leadership has little space to develop initiatives with much longer-term horizons, particularly interventions that take extended periods to rollout.
4. There is also a misalignment around the concept of authority. There is a tendency to assume that, by virtue of being in an elected political portfolio, political authority should supersede professional expertise. This is exacerbated in South Africa with the policy and practice of what is referred to as “cadre deployment”, allocating top public serve positions to loyal party members. This undermines the idea that public service should be led by professional experts with extensive system-management track-records. The dominance of the politicians’ agenda is not counterbalanced by the professional expertise and long-term system improvement. (The interview findings that seem to question, in certain respect)

Districts

5. The tier of government closest to schools would theoretically be best placed to influence the complex changes at the technical core. In South Africa, this tier has no original powers and is a de-concentration structure of provincial departments. Assistance to improve the technical core is unlikely to happen as districts are understaffed, lack professional expertise, are overcommitted with administrative tasks, upwardly accountable and lack the trust of schools and teachers. This situation, which typically results in disempowerment at the district level, mirrors findings by Aiyar and Bhattacharya (2016) from India. Here government teachers were found to be burdened with a wide range of non-academic demands for financial, administrative and academic reports, and requests for information from higher officials and offices that themselves function as ‘post offices’ (i.e., as conduits for the dissemination of vast amounts of information between schools and higher offices.¹³) Aiyar and Bhattacharya (2016) conducted a multi-site ethnographic study of the roles, responsibilities, daily constraints, and incentives that impacted on the work duties of education staff at block and district level offices. The following account by Yoshikawa et al (2018)¹⁴ of the Aiyer and Bhattacharya study reports that “that block-level staff mostly focused on disseminating higher-level instructions to lower-level staff, and on hiring and union issues, rather than on using monitoring data from lower levels to inform higher-level decision-making. The directionality of governance was thus entirely top-down and, moreover, did not stretch down to school-management stakeholders such as parents except when engaging the local level only involved headmasters.” It would seem that this kind of finding could also apply to many South African educational settings.

Voice and Choice

6. Although parents have significant voice through the legislative framework, voice does not provide a space for re-orienting schools towards learning for two reasons. First, the legislation explicitly excludes parents from interfering in matters related to curriculum and pedagogy. Second, there are no consistent and user-friendly measures of learning that school governors could use to hold teachers and schools accountable for learning outcomes.

7. Choice is a major feature of parents’ efforts to improve their children’s learning outcomes. A significant proportion of urban working parents are using the quasi-market within the public-school sector to maximise their children’s chances of success. Although choice is

¹³ Here we need to thank the reviewers of the earlier draft for drawing our attention to the following very useful texts: Aiyar, Y., & Bhattacharya, S. (2016). "The Post Office Paradox". *Economic and Political Weekly*, 51(11), 61–69. and Aiyar, Y., Davis, V., Govindan, G., & Kapoor, T. (2021). *Rewriting the Grammar of the Education System: Delhi’s Education Reform (A Tale of Creative Resistance and Creative Disruption)*. Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE). https://doi.org/10.35489/BSG-RISE-Misc_2021/01

¹⁴ Cited from Hirokazu Yoshikawa, Alice J. Wuermli, Abbie Raikes, Sharon Kim, Sarah B. Kabay, (2018) “Toward High-Quality Early Childhood Development Programs and Policies at National Scale: Directions for Research in Global Contexts.” *Social Policy Report*. Publisher John Wiley & Sons, 1 March 2018, Volume31, Issue 1 Pages 1 - 36

undoubtedly an important path to improved learning outcomes, we need to flag two caveats. First, given the absence of simple, valid and reliable measures of learning, it is not clear what criteria parents are using to inform their choice. Second, choice is not driving out underperforming schools and ineffectiveness at the technical core, but, rather, poorly performing schools are filling with the poorest children from newly established communities without sufficient school places, particularly informal settlements.

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Appendix A: Orientation to Access

From the GDE Strat Plan 2020:

Learner migration

According to an investigation by the National Council of Provinces and Gauteng Provincial Legislature, 47% of international migrants settle in the Johannesburg Metropolitan municipality as well as a large number of migrants from other provinces, notably KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Eastern Cape. Learners from other provinces increased by 9.3% from 73 418 in 2018 to 80 244 in 2019, an increase of 6 826 learners. Learners from foreign countries increased by 9.1% from 24 220 in 2018 to 26 412 in 2019, an increase of 2 192 learners.

Introduction of the first provincial on-line learner admission system

In 2016, The Department in collaboration with the Department of e-Government, introduced the first provincial on-line learner admission system, which is an unqualified success for Grade 1 and 8 learner admissions.

Feeder zones

Following the Constitutional Court ruling that the Department determined feeder zones for schools in the province, the Department undertook to fulfil this mandate based on the principles of access, redress, equity and fairness to ensure that learners, no matter where they are, will have access to quality education. The process is completed and will be in full effect for the admissions process, commencing in the 2020 academic year

Appendix B Finance

How does finance fit into the 5x4 framework? More specifically to what extent does finance contribute to alignment or misalignment and coherence or incoherence and an absence of a focus on early learning outcomes. To do this we need to look at three principal-agent relationships, the relationship between the political heads and senior public servants in the Compact, the relationship between the districts and schools and finally, the relationship between parents and schools/teachers from the vantage point of both Voice and Choice. We do this by focusing on how finance works or to what degree and why it focuses on learning, access, socialisation, and/or patronage.

Although not the primary focus of the Gauteng 5x4 Diagnostic, it is important to locate the Gauteng finance processes within the larger context of the national Departments budget process. Given the concurrent powers and the functions allocated to the national Minister of Education for policy, monitoring, and research in terms of the National Education Policy Act (1998), the national Department is annually allocated a budget for these functions.

In the national Minister of Education's 2022/2023 budget speech, she identified two educational priorities. The first is Early Childhood Development (ECD), education below the reception or pre-Grade 1 year. The other is the three-stream model of curriculum reform at the secondary school level. Although there are clearly links between ECD and literacy and numeracy in the early school grades, there is no explicit focus on that in the Ministers budget priorities in the financial year.

In the 2022/2023 budget year an amount of R29.6 billion or a 4.6% increase (below inflation) was voted to the national Department of Basic Education. This budget is divided into six main programmes: Administration, Curriculum Policy Support and Monitoring, Teacher Education Human Resource and Institutional Development, Planning Information and Assessment and Education Enrichment Services. The allocation for curriculum policy decreased by 2.5% (in real rather than inflation adjusted terms) in the 2022/2023 year. Approximately half of the national education budget is allocated to information and assessment (including the National Senior Certificate examination processes.)

In terms of funding using the conditional grant system (transfers to the provinces), R12.4 billion is allocated to the school infrastructure (building) programme and R8.4 billion was allocated to the school nutrition programme, with only R1.2 billion allocated to initial teacher training (Fundza) and a similar amount for the DBE workbook project (Action Plan Goals 14-17 with Goal 16 being a priority goal). Very small allocations were noted for the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) project (R11 million) and the National Education Coalition Trust (R120 million) (supports Action Plan Goals 1-3 and 7-9).

The 2022/23 budget in which the Minister chose to focus on ECD (Goal 11) and the three-stream secondary curriculum model (Goal 13), and a basic analysis of the national programme and conditional grant allocation clearly suggest that the early grade learning (Foundation Phase) is not necessarily a top priority for the Sixth Administration.

In terms of South African law and policy, the annual education government allocation is split between expenditure at national and provincial levels. Given that provinces are responsible for delivering education, the largest share goes directly to the provincial departments. The overall budget allocation to the provinces is driven by the equitable share formula which is determined primarily by the

population of each province. Once the amount is allocated to the province, it is the Provincial Department of Finance and ultimately the provincial executive council (provincial cabinet) that divides up the provincial budget by department. The two largest allocations historically have been to education and health. The actual amount allocated to the provincial department is largely based on historical patterns, determined by contractual obligations, particularly personnel salaries. This makes up between 70-90% of the budgets for education.

Once the overall provincial education budget is approved, the internal distribution of funds is determined. Since the introduction of medium-term expenditure framework (METF), attempts have been made to develop three-to-five-year budgeting in all line departments. The combination of contractual obligations (salaries) and medium-term expenditure budgeting leaves some discretion to allocate funds to priorities whether it be early learning or access.

That said, once the contractual obligations have been addressed, which include projected salaries, funding for schools via the Norms and Standards for School Funding, ECD, administration, subsidies for independent schools, and capital expenditure, the MEC would top slice what remained for what has become known as 'flagship' projects. The portion of the overall budget allocated for these projects varies, depending on the overall budget allocation and decisions about post establishment. What remains after the top slicing is then divided between Branches and Divisions to run head office projects.

In his 2022/2023 Budget speech, the MEC clarified his 'flagship' projects and assured the provincial legislature that his priority continues to be on implementing the 'paperless classroom' initiative started in 2015. This involves working in two distinct sets of schools, full ICT schools called "schools of specialisation" and no-fee secondary schools with the priority on providing tablets for Grade 9-12 learners.

"The 2022/23 FY plans to build on the gains the GDE has already made. In financial year 2022/23, the intention is to consolidate grades nine, 10, 11 and 12 by converting outstanding classrooms to be tech-enabled; that is, classrooms installed with LED boards." (TWeb 2022).

Although in the 1990s, the national Department of Education established a conditional grant to districts which provided discretionary funds directly to district offices, this practice has been discontinued. As such, no real or paper discretionary budget exists at the district level. In other words, district officials have no discretion to allocate funding to schools.

While the district officials have little or no discretion, given the status of the schools as juristic persons, and the provisions of Sections 20 and 21 in the South African Schools Act (1996), school governing bodies do have discretion on spending on the non-personnel budget (Q4-5 on personnel as well) and have the capacity to raise additional revenue. Although this power was substantially curtailed with the publication of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (expressly prohibiting Q1-3 schools from levelling compulsory school fees) in principle, schools have more budget and expenditure discretion than any other level of the system. In practice however, given requirements to spending a significant proportion of the per learner allocation for all non-personal costs on Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM), at least for Q1-3 schools, the amounts are limited. There is some evidence that patronage and graft has come to influence how schools allocate funding. This is evident in numerous newspaper reports of school conflicts within governing bodies and between governing bodies

and school principals. There is limited evidence however, that at the school level, Voice has been used to priorities learning.

What are we to make of the financial provision within the 5x4 framework. Although the budget does not single out early grade learning outcomes as a separate conditional grant, and it may not be identified as a 'flagship' priority, the reality is that much of the budget is directly or indirectly geared towards the technical core. Teachers, textbooks, infrastructure, nutrition and scholar transport are all inputs essential to the technical core. That said, the degree to which they are aligned and cohere is open for question. But this is less a finance question than a strategy/leadership/management problem.

The problem of the effective flexible deployment of the resources both at provincial and school levels have received little attention. Much of the decision-making on resource allocation is formula driven, which on the one hand does not provide for strategic flexibility to maximize the impact of resources for improvement but also limits the damaging effects of patronage and corruption.

Appendix C Information systems

While information and information systems are not exclusive purview of the districts, and certainly play a major role in the Compact and Voice/Choice relationships, we will explore the information ecosystem in the South African schools in this section.

There are at least six components of the information ecosystem in Gauteng and the South African education system more broadly.

EMIS system

The Education Management Information System is the main and possibly the most important component of the information ecosystem. EMIS is primarily populated via two annual surveys, the SNAP 10 day Survey and the Annual School Survey. These surveys provide extensive information on schools that is used for a range of purposes, particularly allocation of teaching posts and allocation for non-personal related subsidies.

SA SAMS

The South African School Administration and Management System is an all in one computerized management system for all schools populated with a very wide range of data on every aspects of the school from learner information, resources, enrolment, attendance, finance, timetabling, curriculum offerings, school governance and many more. Data generated for the SA SAMS is designed to be used at the school, district, provincial and national level for a range of management and decision making purposes.

Data Driven Districts

Using data on the SA SAMS, the NGO project is designed to help users at all levels in the system use educational data to improve decision making. In existence since 2013, it works across provinces, at head office, districts and school levels. The key is to help school level users with data management and data visualization. The 2019 evaluation of the DDD found the following:

- The link between National education goals, key performance metrics and data strategy is ineffective and not driving data-driven decision-making at each level.
- Performance data from national assessments at multiple stages during the education journey is limited and infrequent.
- Despite great advances in data collection, gaps remain in data reliability and turnaround times. Data collected is not used or analysed to its full potential to improve performance (Dell Foundation, 2019).

EGRA/EGMA

Although the RTI developed early grade reading assessment tool was primarily designed for evaluation purposes, the Department of Basic Education initiative an intervention with EGRA which focused on its use by teachers in classroom situations. Comprehensive data from EGRA however have been generated from external improvement initiatives and data generated from these processes have informed policy

development processes. EGRA however has not been used for accountability purposes. It has been incrementally rolled out in around 5000 schools by 2020.

Systemic Evaluation

Since the discontinuation of the Annual National Assessments, the Systemic Evaluation is the main national process to evaluate learning. To be conducted in Grades 3, 6 and 9, on a three-year cycle in a sample of schools, it is designed to address three tiers in the system, learner learning in core subjects, whole school evaluation and for system support.

Grade 12 National Senior Certificate Examinations

The national exit examinations generate the most consistent and reliable information on student learning. The limitation is that only half of the entering cohort of learners in Grade 1 remain in the system to write the final examinations. This notwithstanding, it remains the primary means to measure both individual student learning, but school and system effectiveness.

The overall picture of information is that there is extensive amounts of data collected both about enrolment, attendance, resources and learning outcomes but the quality of the data is uneven, and key stakeholders are not using that information consistently or for the purposes of improvement. There is very little focus on using data for purposes of accountability. Reporting is primarily focused on demonstrating that the system has data process rather than using data of accountability purposes.



Example materials from the final report phase

Final report by the **EPRC** team from their diagnostic pilot in **Uganda**



IMPROVING EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN UGANDA: EVIDENCE FROM THE PRIMARY EDUCATION SUB-SECTOR

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is vast recognition of a global learning crisis for children as global efforts shift from focusing on access to schooling to learning. This is also embedded in Sustainable Development Goal four (SDG 4), aimed at achieving "quality education" with a focus on learning for all. At the national level, Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP III) through the human capital development program not only focuses on schooling but also specifies outcomes related to learning, like the learning-adjusted years of schooling.

Uganda has registered relative success in improving access to education. Specifically, for primary education, enrolment increased from 8.26 million in 2016 to 10.7 million in 2020 (NRM Manifesto, 2021), the pupil-classroom ratio improved from 63:1 in 2015 to 49:1 in 2020, the pupil-teacher ratio improved from 43:1 in 2015 to 34:1 in 2020, the PLE pass rate increased from 86% in 2015 to 90.3% in 2020, the survival rate to primary seven increased from 30.10% in 2015 to 34.38% in 2020 (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2022).

Despite this success in schooling, there have been challenges in translating this increased access to schooling into learning. Many pupils are completing primary education without acquiring the basic competencies. For example, according to the 2021 Uwezo National Learning Assessment (Uwezo Uganda, 2021), over 25% of primary three children could read nothing from a primary two-level English story, and an almost equal percentage (25.8%) could only read letters and not words. Overall, for the primary level - Primary 3 to Primary 7 - at least 11.6% of the children cannot read anything from a primary two-level English story, an increase from 6.2% in 2018. They observed a similar trend for numeracy, with over 10.8% of children in primary 3 unable to solve primary two-level numeracy tasks. This poses persistent challenges because once children lag early on, many are likely to continue in school gaining no learning or drop out altogether. This affects the country's ability to meet global targets such as the SDG4 relating to quality education for all and has implications for the country's socio-economic transformation.

Both government and development partners have undertaken several initiatives to tackle such learning challenges. These range from improving the pupil-to-book ratio to enhancing learning, tackling teacher absenteeism, and introducing a new teacher policy in 2021 to ensure an adequate supply of qualified teachers.

Interactions between different education actors, including teachers and pupils, lead to learning. However, it is crucial to recognize that the various actors are embedded in systems to analyze challenges in the primary education sub-sector and improve the interactions between the different actors to achieve learning. Hence, it is imperative to understand these actors, their interactions, and how they influence system outcomes to make meaningful and lasting improvements. This study takes a systems approach to diagnose the systemic drivers of incoherence in the primary education sub-sector in Uganda, highlighting how the education

system can overcome this incoherence to tackle the learning crisis and deliver learning to all children.

This study aims to facilitate the government's use of "systems thinking" to diagnose components of the education system that are not working together as well as they could to deliver learning. Specifically, the study:

- a) Identifies the key actors in Uganda's primary education system and specifies the relationships between them;
- b) Identifies the primary alignments(s) of the relationships;
- c) Surfaces incoherences within the system; and
- d) Identifies priorities for reform to create better alignment around improving learning outcomes.

We structure the rest of the report as follows. Section 2 presents the approach adopted for the study, including the Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) framework and the methodology. Section 3 maps the key actors in the primary education system and describes the relationships between them according to the RISE framework. Section 4 discusses alignments of the different components of the primary education system with respect to the RISE framework. Section 5 presents incoherence within the system, and section 6 concludes and presents policy recommendations.

2. APPROACH

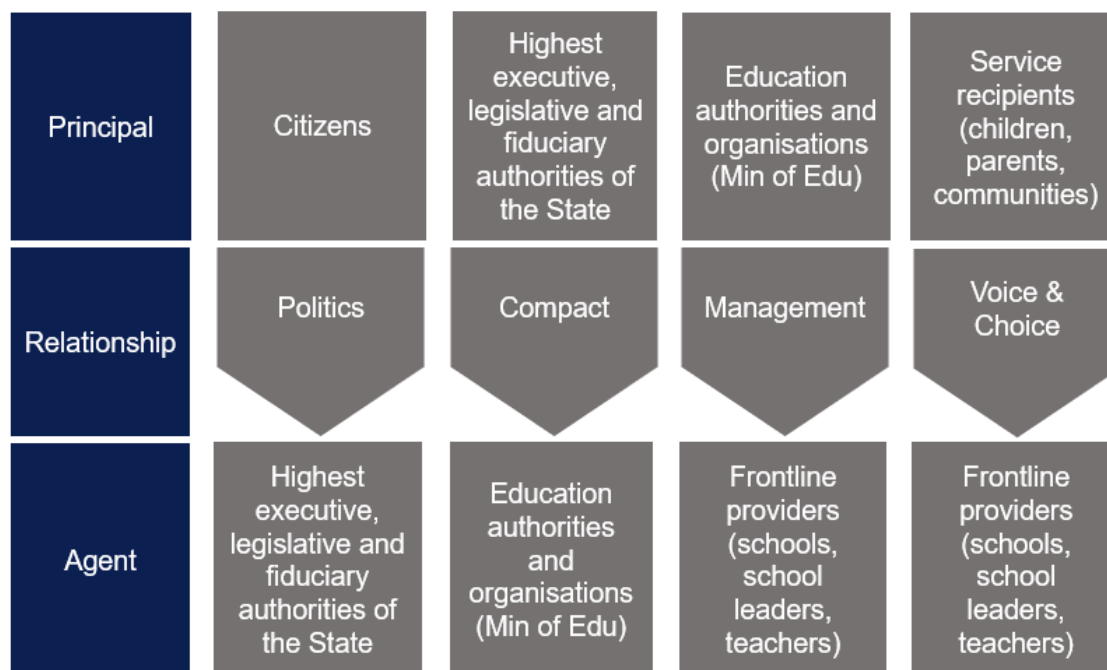
2.1 The Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) Systems Framework

The study employs the RISE systems framework to investigate the objectives. The framework provides an analytical tool to examine and understand the key actors in an education system, their relationships, and how they interact to produce different systems outcomes (Pritchett, 2015). The RISE framework is composed of three components: (i) key relationships, (ii) design elements, and (iii) system alignments.

Key relationships

This component defines the actors in the education system and the relationship between them. It is based on a principal-agent model where the principal wishes to accomplish a certain task and gets an agent to help them complete it. It comprises four key accountability relationships, i.e., politics, compact, management, and voice and choice.

Figure 1: Accountability relationships in the education system



Source: Spivack, 2021

Politics describes the relationship between citizens and the state's highest executive, legislative, and fiduciary authorities. Here, the citizens are the principals, while the country's highest authorities are the agents. As principals, citizens exercise their authority in different ways. One way is through participation in elections where the citizens cast their votes according to who speaks to their needs, for example, for the education sector. Equally, through participation in civil society organizations, citizens make their expectations known to the highest state authorities and hold them accountable in the same regard.

Compact describes the relationship between the highest executive, legislative and fiduciary authorities as principals and the Education authorities and organizations as agents. When citizens make their requests known to the country's highest authorities, they channel the same through different education authorities who assist in implementation, hence acting as a voice through which they relay objectives of the politics relationship to those in charge of the delivery of education.

Management defines the relationship between education authorities, organizations, and frontline education providers. The education authorities and organizations are the principals in this relationship and the frontline providers, which include schools, school leaders, and teachers, are the agents.

Finally, **voice and choice** define the relationship between service recipients, including children, parents, and communities, as principals and frontline providers as agents. The principals in this relationship exercise their authority and demand accountability from frontline providers in two ways; one, they exert authority by voicing what they wish to see in a school or voicing their

dissatisfaction with the way teachers conduct themselves. If they do not meet the above, the principals then exercise their authority through choice, i.e., they look for a teacher or school that satisfies their needs and requirements.

Design elements

This second component of the RISE framework defines the nature of the interaction between the principal and agent in terms of what the agent asks the principal to do, how the principal equips the agents to do it, and monitors and motivates their performance (Pritchett, 2015).

As explained below, there are five design elements, including (i) delegation, (ii) finance, (iii) support, (iv) information, and (v) motivation. Delegation is what the principal mandates or asks the agent to do. Finance details the resources that the principal provides to the agent to carry out the mandated tasks. Support is through assistance and training the principal provides to the agent to do their job, i.e., pre-service and in-service training for the case of education. Information is how the principal evaluates the agent's performance, i.e., information that the principal uses to evaluate the agent's performance. Motivation is how the principal motivates the agent and how the agent's welfare is contingent on their performance against set objectives. Motivation can be intrinsic (from within/agent dependent) or extrinsic (mediated by the principal).

When combined, the two components discussed above form the RISE diagnostic framework, a 5*4 framework, with the relationships as the columns and design elements as the rows (figure 2).

Figure 2: The 5*4 Education Systems Framework

Five design elements of each relationship of accountability (Principal (P) to Agent (A))	Principal - Agent Relationships			
	Politics: Citizens and the highest authorities of the state	Compact: Highest authority of the State to Education authority	Management: Education authorities and schools, school leaders, and teachers	Voice & Choice: parents/children and schools/school leaders/ teachers
Delegation: What principal wants agent to do.				
Finance: Resources principal allocates to agent.				
Support: Preparation and assistance that principal provides to agent.				
Information: How the principal assesses the agent's performance.				
Motivation: How the principal motivates the agent.				
Performance of the system is the result of the feedback loops and relationships between the actors				

Source: Pritchett, 2015

System alignments

This forms the third component of the RISE diagnostic framework, highlighting the main objective that parts and the entire system of education aim to achieve. For a well-functioning system aiming at delivering learning, relationships of accountability need to be aligned with a learning objective across the distinct design elements. In this case, relationships are aligned around all children's learning. Hence, clear goals for learning are articulated, financed, and supported. However, systems of education are often incoherent in learning in the following ways. First, a system may be aligned towards a different objective other than learning for all. These alignments include:

Selection: In such a system, relationships of accountability are aligned around selecting the deserving few who will get a credential and a place at an elite university/job. Such a system often emphasizes performance, especially in high stake examinations like the Primary Leaving Examinations in Uganda.

Access: In a system aligned for access, relationships are aligned around expanding access and attainment. Based on the RISE framework, quality is usually defined as meeting minimum input standards, such as enrolment, grade attainment, and progression.

Socialization: Relationships are aligned around socialization or ideological goals. In such a setting, they give priority to socializing children with specific values. These can be, for instance, religious or political values.

Patronage or special interests: clientelism characterizes the relationship of accountability. Short-term political objectives dominate, and the system has lost its educational core. Special interests (i.e., teacher unions) may dominate; the need to meet special interest needs can become the primary focus.

Misalignment: The accountability and design elements' relationships may be misaligned. For instance, in the management relationship, the Ministry of Education may expect teachers to deliver a curriculum that prioritizes foundational literacy for all but use the information on exam scores as the primary criteria to assess the performance of the frontline providers. This raises incoherence between delegation and information. This will ultimately force frontline providers to emphasize exam scores and curriculum completion at the expense of ensuring pupils' mastery of the curriculum content.

Misalignment may also occur within design elements (between relationships). For example, the Ministry of Education may launch an initiative aiming to use the local language as a language of instruction at the foundational levels of schooling and delegate this to schools and teachers to implement. However, parents may prioritize their children learning and speaking English, pressuring teachers to instruct in English even at the foundational level.

2.2 Data and methods

The study mainly employed document reviews and qualitative methods to analyze the primary education system in Uganda. The analysis followed the RISE framework discussed above. In addition, we held a validation meeting to discuss, contextualize, and improve the findings. We discuss the adopted methods below.

Document review

This involved reviewing government policy documents, especially education policy-related documents, and secondary information, including gray literature and published journal articles. During this process, existing evidence was collected and analyzed following the diagnostic framework. Gaps that required further probing and further analysis were also identified at this stage. Based on the document review, research tools, specifically questionnaires, were developed to be used in the primary data collection stage.

Qualitative methods

Qualitative methods were the primary method of data collection and analysis employed. These involved seeking views from different stakeholders on their delegated mandates, information used to assess their performance, finance provided by the principles to fulfill their roles, and support and motivation received to deliver on their mandates. The study adopted the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) approach to gathering information about management and voice and choice relationships. In addition, in-depth interviews (IDIs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were used to collect information about the compact relationship.

We conducted FGDs through regional workshops covering eight regions: Eastern Uganda, South-Western Uganda, Western Uganda, West-Nile region, northern Uganda, Central Uganda, and Kampala sub-regions. Participants were selected from different districts, as shown in Table A1 in the annex. Workshop participants included district authorities (i.e., District Education Officers, District Inspectors, Center Coordinating Tutors, and District service commission representatives), school leaders (i.e., private school directors, Private and government school headteachers, School Management Committee representatives, and Directors of Studies), teachers (Private, government, Lower Primary, Upper primary, Rural, and urban mix), and parents, Community Opinion leaders, Religious leaders, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) representatives. We mobilized workshop participants with the help of the District Education Officers in each selected district.

KIIs and IDIs with central government officials like the Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) were conducted to gather information relevant to the compact and management relationships of the framework.

3. KEY ACTORS IN UGANDA'S PRIMARY EDUCATION SYSTEM

3.1 Overview of Uganda's Primary Education System

Uganda's education system is divided into four cycles; pre-primary/early childhood, which usually lasts three years; primary, which is seven years; secondary, which is six years - ordinary level (lower secondary) covering four years and advanced level (upper secondary) covering two years, after which students advance to university or other tertiary institutions.

Notably, the primary education cycle is divided into three sections; lower primary, which starts from primary one to primary three; transition grade, which is primary four; and the upper primary, which is from primary five to primary seven. At the end of primary seven, pupils sit for a high-stakes Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) conducted by the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), which determines their progression into lower secondary.

Relatedly, the primary-level curriculum is delivered in three phases developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). In lower primary, pupils follow the thematic curriculum, which emphasizes the use of themes, local language as the medium of instruction, and continuous assessment of learners' achievements. In the transition grade (grade 4), pupils use the transition curriculum, which shifts from learning through themes to subject-based learning, and gradually shifts from using familiar/local language to using English as a medium of instruction. Finally, in the upper primary, pupils follow the upper primary curriculum, which is purely subject-based.

Concerning the education service providers in the primary cycle, there is a mix of government-aided (established by faith-based foundation bodies), purely public schools, and privately owned schools. According to the 2017 Education Statistical Abstract, 59% of the available 20,305 primary schools are government-aided (Ministry of Education, 2019). Government-aided schools have a tuition-free policy following the introduction of the Universal Primary Education Policy in 1997. Private schools comprise the mainstream/traditional schools that follow the national curricula as explained above, and international schools that follow international curricula like the National Curriculum of England, International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) curriculum, and Accelerated Christian Education curriculum, etc. A small percentage of children attend home schooling.

3.2 Mapping key actors and relationships between them

Following the RISE diagnostic framework, figure 3 highlights the different actors along the accountability relationships for Uganda's primary education system. In the politics relationship, the principals are the citizens, and the agents are the highest executive authority (president), the highest legislative authority (the parliament of Uganda), and the highest fiduciary authority (the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED)). In Uganda's setting, the politics relationship is key and influences the Ministry of Education and Sports operations and

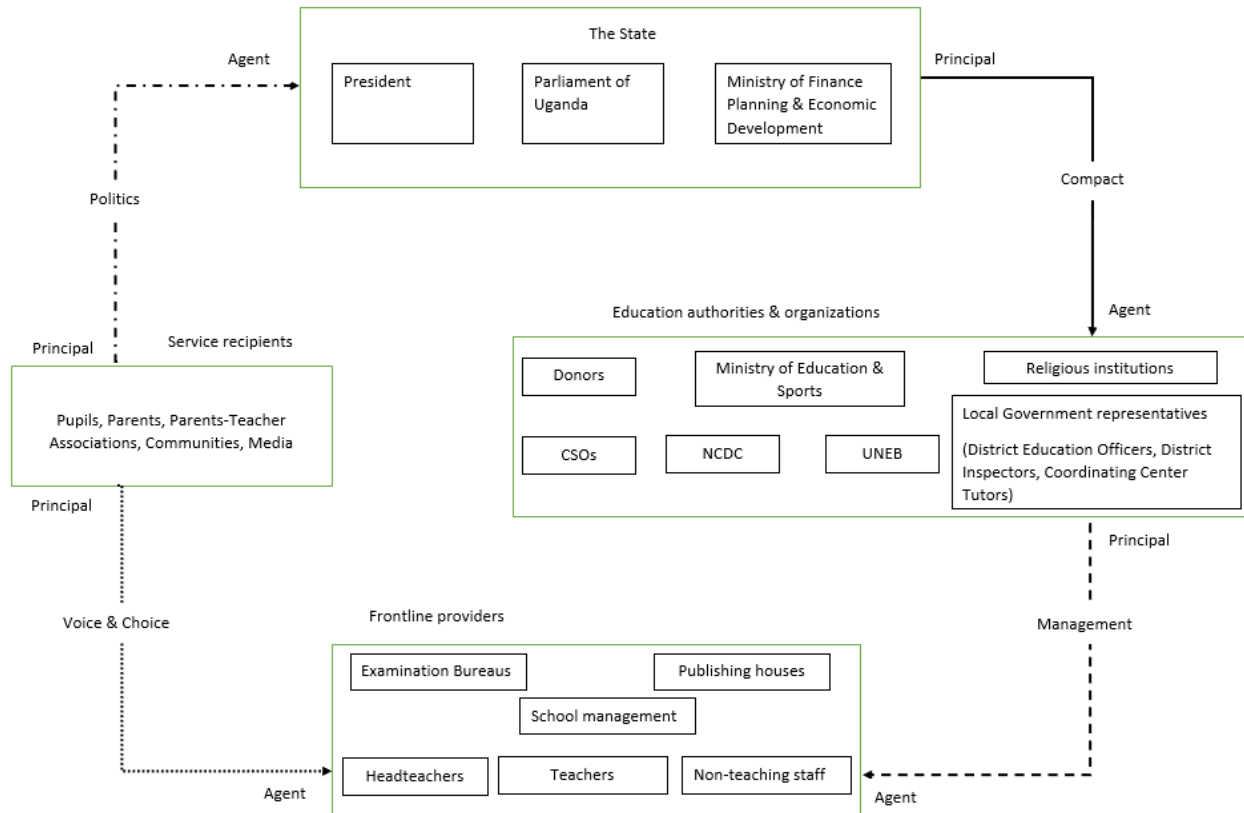
the education sector. However, this study focuses on compact, management, voice, and choice relationships.

For the compact relationship, the principals are the president, parliament, and MoFPED. The agents are the education authorities and organizations. These include the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), the leading agent in education. The MoES also includes other entities like the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), which handles curriculum development and the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), the national assessment body. At the Primary level, UNEB oversees the high-stakes Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) that pupils write at the end of the primary cycle in primary seven. Other actors identified as agents in the compact relationship include religious foundation bodies, donors, civil society organizations, and local government representatives such as DEOs, District inspectors, and Centre Coordinating Tutors (CCTs).

The education authorities and organizations identified above become principals in the management relationship. They oversee frontline providers who include the primary schools, both government and private, school leaders like headteachers and private school directors, and teaching and non-teaching staff. Other agents include private publishers of textbooks like MK publishers and McMillan and examination bureaus like Sipro Educational Services Limited and Prime educational consult.

As shown in the diagnostic framework in figure 3, frontline providers are agents in both the management and voice & choice relationships. In the voice and choice relationship, the principals are service recipients who include the pupils, parents often represented by the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), and communities where these schools are located.

Figure 3: Accountability relationships for Uganda's Primary Education system



Source: Authors' own construct

4. SYNTHESIS OF ALIGNMENTS FOR DIFFERENT DESIGN ELEMENTS AND SUB-DESIGN ELEMENTS

4.1 Compact relationship

The compact relationship is largely aligned for access with a few select components, as summarized in table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of the key findings in the Compact relationship

Element	Sub-element	Key findings
Delegation	High-level targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to education as measured by enrolment rates (UPE Policy 1997). This has increased over the years e.g., from 7.5 million in 2007 to 8.8 million in 2017. Increased completion rates at primary seven and transition to secondary level (NDPII, 2015/16-2019/20). NDPIII targets to increase transition rates from 61 in FY 2017/18 to 79 in FY2024/25

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased average years of schooling from 6.1 to 11 (NDP III, 2020/21-2024/25), NRM manifesto 2021-26. • Increased pass rates, especially at Primary Leaving Examinations.
	Human Resource goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus is on attracting and retaining enough qualified teachers rather than good teaching • Quality is defined by thin observable inputs like improving teacher-pupil ratio and class size (Budget strategy, 2023-24) e.g., recruiting 2,650 primary school teachers to enhance staff levels.
	De jure/de facto delegation gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a large gap between what is laid out in these policy documents and the actual implementation. For instance, in-service training is not regularly undertaken as laid out.
Finance	How is finance for education structured?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing decisions for each FY are guided by a budget strategy that follows national priorities. • Financing decisions for the primary education cycle are mostly justified in terms of access and expansion • Non-wage recurrent budget allocations to Local Governments prioritize enrolments.
	How is financing for teachers structured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries for primary teachers are determined by a compensation scheme which is not responsive to attracting, retaining, and motivating quality teaching
	How is finance for other education inputs structured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing decisions for now-wage are usually based on enrolment • The largest proportion of spending goes to financing inputs such as the construction and renovation of school facilities, and the supply of teaching materials
	Where and to what extent is discretion for finance in education distributed throughout the system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At each level in the budgeting process, different entities have discretion over the allocation. • The final approval of fiscal allocations and the final budget rests with the cabinet and the parliament. • Final financing decisions are made at the top due to limited resources.
Information	How is information for education structured?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General focus on enrolment rates, transition, completion, and pass rates-especially in PLE, and thin inputs like the total number of schools, teacher-pupil ratio, infrastructure like the classrooms and toilets

How does the system determine that education is of sufficient quality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality is measured by a pupil's achievement in literacy, numeracy, and life skills measured through performance on the examinable subjects
What information is included in the EMIS system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EMIS tracks inputs like classrooms, teachers, and stances but does not track learning.

A detailed discussion of each design element follows in the next sub-sections.

4.1.1 Delegation

The delegation element in the compact relationship comprises three sub-elements covering high-level targets, human resources goals, and the de jure/de facto delegation gap. It is aligned for access, as discussed below.

High-level targets: This sub-element covers areas pertaining to the priorities of the education system for the state executive authority and what the executive authority needs to see the ministry of education deliver to consider it to be successful. They reflected these priorities in national strategic documents like the National Development Plans, National Budget Framework Papers, and NRM manifestos. Since the NRM government came into power in 1986, the focus has been increasing access to education through rising enrolment rates. This is reflected in deliberate steps such as enacting the Universal Primary Education policy in 1997, which saw the abolition of tuition fees for public schools.

Currently, and with relative success concerning access to education, there is a move towards ensuring the quality of education. However, this is still measured through thin indicators like completion and retention rates. For example, the NDPII (2015/16 – 2019/20) targeted to increase the completion rate of primary seven and increase the transition rate to secondary, and the current national development plan (NDP III 2020/21 – 2024/25) targets to increase the average years of schooling from 6.1 to 11 years. Similarly, the NRM manifesto 2021-26 promises to ensure children complete at least 11 years of school. Hence, the executive authorities need to see the Ministry of Education and Sports deliver such inputs as higher enrolments, completion rates, and transition rates in addition to improved Primary Leaving Examinations pass rates, Pupil-teacher ratios, Pupil-classroom ratios, and literacy rates which makes this sub-element largely aligned for access.

Human resources: This sub-element covers how the executive sets out human resource goals. The sub-element is aligned for access, as there is a focus on attracting and retaining enough qualified teachers instead of good teaching. Quality is defined by thin observable school features/inputs as the pupil-teacher ratio and class size. For example, the Budget Strategy 2023-24 opines that "staffing levels will be enhanced by recruiting 2,650 primary school teachers in the least staffed Local Governments to improve Teacher-Pupil Ratio". Moreover, the NRM manifesto

2021-2026 points out improving teacher living conditions focusing particularly on staff accommodation.

De jure/de facto delegation gap: This sub-element discusses how much of a gap exists between articulated and actual goals. Overall, clear and articulate goals and objectives are set out in policy documents as the performance management guidelines for tertiary institutions and schools (2020), the National Teacher Policy (2019), etc. However, there is an enormous gap between what is laid out in these policy documents and the actual implementation. Discrepancies in articulated and actual goals often stem from conflicting interests of the different actors and limited financing. For example, we sometimes observe presidential directives overriding the articulated policy guidelines. Teacher in-service training also highlights the sizeable gap between articulated and actual goals. Whereas this is supposed to be done on a continuous basis, it is not the case and often responds to a centralized change.

4.1.2 Finance

Finance is discussed along four sub-elements, i.e., how is finance for education structured, how is financing for teachers structured, how is finance for other education inputs structured, and where and to what extent is discretion for finance in education distributed throughout the system? We primarily aligned this element for access with a few characteristics of selection. Due to the nature of the compact relationship, we discuss this element concerning public/government-aided schools.

How is finance for education structured: Financing decisions for each fiscal year are guided by a budget strategy that is drawn following national priorities as enshrined in national strategic plans like the National Development Plans (NDPs). The budget strategy lays down country priorities and detailed interventions for each year. At this point, the MoFPED determines indicative fiscal ceilings for the financial year. Once the different education entities receive the fiscal ceilings, they prepare budget framework papers detailing their allocations and work plans in line with national priorities. As in the recent budget strategy documents, financing decisions for the primary education cycle have mostly been justified regarding access and expansion with financing priorities, such as enhancing staffing levels to improve teacher-pupil ratios and automatic promotion. Priorities/policy pronouncements, e.g. presidential directives, often guide financing decisions that have been geared towards increasing access in the recent past. For example, the directive on having a public primary school per parish in the strategic guidelines and directives for the term 2016 to 2021.

Additionally, in allocations to the local governments under the education budget, primary education non-wage recurrent allocations prioritize the number of learners in primary school (75% in FY2018/19, 90% in FY2019/20, and FY2020/21), taking the largest share in the grant allocation formula, followed by the population of school going age (15% in FY2018/19) and performance metrics like percentage of children passing PLE grade 1 to 3 (6% in FY2018/19, 2019/20 and FY2020/21) where local governments with lower performance are given more to

help them catch up with higher performing local governments (National Budget Framework Papers FY2018/19, FY2019/20, FY2020/21). The above discussion suggests that this sub-element is largely aligned for access, with a few elements aligned for selection.

How is financing for teachers structured: This sub-element is generally aligned for access as salaries for primary education teachers are determined according to a salary scheme with four scales, i.e., U7, U6, U5, and U4. New entrants referred to as education assistants (Grade III teachers) teachers fall under the U7 salary scale (UGX 499,684 - 568,166), senior education assistants under U6 (UGX 605,100 - 613,485), deputy head teachers in U5 (UGX 662,165-773,952) while head teachers are in U4 (UGX 777,512 - 980,211). The above compensation scheme is not responsive to attracting, retaining, and motivating quality teaching, as evidenced by the rampant teacher strikes in recent years because of poor pay, high teacher absenteeism, and churning of the teaching profession.

How is finance for other education inputs structured? Like finance for teachers, finance for other education inputs is aligned for access. As highlighted in previous discussions, financing decisions for non-wage are usually based on enrolments. The largest proportion of non-wage spending goes to financing inputs, such as the construction and renovation of school facilities and the supply of teaching materials. A significant portion of the development budget comes from development partners through donations and grants.

Where and to what extent is discretion for finance in education distributed throughout the system? At each level in the budgeting process, distinct entities have discretion over the budgeting decision and allocation. However, this is with guidance from the national development plans and strategic priorities as stated in the budget strategy produced each financial year by the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The final approval of fiscal allocations, as indicated in the compiled national budget framework paper and the final budget, rests with the cabinet and the parliament. However, whereas there is some discretion at different levels, they usually make financing decisions at the top because of limited resources.

4.1.3 Information

The information element in the compact relationship comprises three sub-elements: how information for education is structured, how the system determines that education is of sufficient quality, and what information they include in the system EMIS. This element is generally aligned for both access and selection.

How is information for education structured: This sub-element covers the nature of the information received by the executive or fiduciary authorities on the performance of education authorities. It further captures the regularity, reliability, and relevance of such information. Generally, this sub-element is aligned for access and selection. This is because there is a focus on information pertaining to enrolment rates, transition, completion, and pass rates, especially in the high-stakes primary Leaving examinations, as produced in unique documents like the

National Budget Framework Papers. As evidenced in the annual school census, there is a focus on thin inputs, such as the total number of schools and infrastructure like the classrooms and toilets. Specifically, concerning the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, MoES provides information on the utilization of funds as per the annual budget allocations, mainly through regular semi-annual and annual budget performance reports.

How does the system determine that education is of sufficient quality? At the primary level, quality is measured by a pupil's literacy, numeracy, and life skills. This is usually measured through the pupil's performance on the examinable subjects at the national examinations. Further still, quality is often measured using thin input indicators such as enrolment rate, completion rate, pupil/teacher ratio, and teachers' qualifications. Hence, like the previous sub-element, this sub-element is aligned for access and selection.

What information is included in the EMIS system? MoES maintains an [EMIS](#) that captures data on key performance indicators of the education sector. These include teachers, pupils, infrastructure, institutions, school finances, and audit and school inspection information. Data from the EMIS is used to produce outputs such as annual statistical abstracts, fact sheets, and booklets. Most of the data that feeds into the EMIS is generated through the annual schools census that focuses on basic data used especially for planning (especially budgeting), policy analysis, development, and decision-making.

4.2 Management

The management relationship is mainly aligned for access and selection with a few components of patronage/self-interest, as summarized in table 2 below. A detailed discussion of each element follows after table 2.

Table 2: Summary of the key findings in the Management relationship

Element	Sub-element	Key findings
Delegation	High-level targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education system (MoES) prioritizes enrolments, retention, progression, completion, and academic performance. NCDC requires schools to implement the curriculum as designed for content mastery. UNEB expects schools to prepare and present pupils for exams.
	Alignment of the curriculum to the learning levels of pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The different curricula are, by design, aligned with the learning levels of pupils. However, in implementation, the curricula are deemed overly ambitious and theoretical.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum implementation prioritizes curriculum completion rather than content mastery and comprehension.
	Local discretion granted to schools or teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public schools have limited discretion over the mode of instruction, mainly stemming from limited resources. • In private schools, there is considerable flexibility to allow teachers to change their mode of instruction for better academic performance.
Finance	How is financing for teachers structured?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In public schools, the payment of primary teachers follows a salary scheme determined by the public service commission. • In private schools, teachers are paid mainly according to their pupils' academic performance. Others include existing staffing gaps, experience and teacher qualifications.
	How is finance for other education inputs structured?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing decisions for now-wage are usually based on enrolment
	Centralization versus local autonomy in allocating funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders in public schools are involved in the lower level of planning for central funds. • There is some discretion as school leaders can reallocate funds across budget lines apart from the scholastic materials and co-curricular activities budget lines.
	Accounts versus accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers in public schools are hired to close the existing staffing gaps • They put limited attention on financing teachers to achieve learning objectives in schools.
Support	Quality of the instructional materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They supply instructional materials in inadequate quantities save for some public schools, especially in the central urban regions with a pupil-textbook ratio of 1:1; some materials have shallow content and are deemed irrelevant. • Supply is marred by distributional errors, especially for the thematic curriculum materials in local languages. • Commercialization of the printing and distribution of instructional materials has further compromised the quality of the materials. • Schools lack training on using instructional material, primarily because of inadequate resources.

	Coherence between the instructional materials/ training and other design elements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instructional materials provided through the official government channels are aligned with the curriculum, examinations, and students' learning levels, unlike those supplied solely by private entities. • An inevitable mismatch is because of some materials' vocabulary is difficult for learners to interpret.
	Form of instructional materials and teacher training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-service training in public schools is often irregular and in response to a centralized change, while in private schools, it is usually based on a needs assessment. • There are no specialized pre-service requirements for the different primary school levels, i.e., one only needs a grade three certificate.
	Delivery of teacher training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-service training typically follows a cascade model. • Pre-service training is mainly theoretical, with only three months of teaching practice out of the two years of study. • In public schools, over 70% of teachers do not receive supervision from school leaders.
Information	Most critical information sought by MoES from schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most critical information relates to pupil enrolment and attendance, inputs such as school infrastructure, staff attendance, lesson plans, and schemes of work.
	Exam Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prepare learners for the high stake PLE exams, encourage competition, and test memorization of content for progression. • Sometimes to help poor performers through remedial lessons and to test and revise teaching methods.
	Exam Design (Exam-curriculum alignment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, due to the proliferation of private exam bureaus, exams are often misaligned with the curriculum and focus on lower-order levels of cognitive demand.
	Accounts Vs Accounting for school leadership and teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good teaching in school is mainly judged on the pupil's academic performance, especially in the PLE exams. • Education authorities judge good school leadership based on school maintenance and functionality (proper utilization of funds, school hygiene, school enrolment).
	Information use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They often use the information on exams for the improvement of performance, teacher placement i.e., transfers, promotion, or demotion, and evaluating teaching methods.

Motivation	Intrinsic motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is a low-status profession characterized by low pay and is often joined as a last resort. • An overwhelming majority of teachers would prefer administrative to teaching roles because of higher pay, prestige, less work burden, etc.
	Extrinsic motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher career structures (hiring, firing, placement, appraisal, promotion, etc.) are mainly determined by the performance of pupils, qualifications, and experience. • Tribalism and corruption feature regarding teacher career structures in public schools.

4.2.1 Delegation

The delegation element under management comprises four elements that cover the different aspects of the education system and is generally aligned for access with some elements of selection and learning. The elements include high-level targets, curriculum alignment to pupils' learning levels, the most critical responsibilities, and the local discretion granted to schools or teachers.

High-level targets: This sub-element examines the education system priorities. More succinctly, it seeks to understand what education authorities require from schools and teachers and what they aim to achieve. Generally, the education system prioritizes enrolment and retention, i.e., keeping children longer in school, especially the girl child, and academic performance measured by exam scores, progression, and completion rates. Additionally, NCDC expects schools and teachers to implement the curriculum as subscribed to exhibit academic excellence measured through marks. Specifically, different schools prioritize different targets. For instance, while private schools are aligned for selection, our analysis shows that government-owned schools are mostly aligned for access. Private schools aim to ensure the best performance, especially at Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE). Here, schools prioritize achieving the highest number of students in division one to attract more clients, as noted by a school headteacher in one workshop:

"For private schools, this is business, and clients are interested in excellent results, and that's what we aim to give them. Every parent wants to see their child in first grade."

In addition, even the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEBC) and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) expect schools to present and register learners who can pass and excel in their examinations. On the other hand, the majority of public schools are interested in enrollment (aligned for access). We mainly attributed this to the fact that funds given to schools depending on the number of pupils in that school, meaning that the more the number, the bigger the budget, regardless of whether the school can ensure learning. Additionally, public schools are mandated to enroll all children to provide access for all, as stipulated in the 1997 UPE Policy. As a result, this has increased access over the years but undermined the quality of learning.

Notably, some traces of learning exist in a few schools that look beyond numbers and good grades but try to build the talent and skills of children. This is done through special programs such as sports days, career days and the application of hands-on skills, among other indicators of learning.

Alignment of the curriculum to the learning levels of pupils: This sub-element covers areas pertaining to the appropriateness and quality of the curriculum. The primary curriculum for Uganda is divided into three: the thematic curriculum for Primary one to Primary three, the transition curriculum for Primary four and the upper curriculum for Primary five to Primary seven. Due to COVID-19, schools closed for almost two years, so an abridged curriculum was introduced to cover lost learning. A detailed discussion of each regarding its appropriateness and quality follows.

Generally, the thematic curriculum exhibits some learning elements and is deemed appropriate for learners because it emphasizes competencies such as reading, writing, and listening, which are key for learners at that level. The curriculum encourages learning in themes, is child-centred, and encourages teaching in mother languages. Learning in themes helps children learn from the known to the unknown, and the themes are based on the environment, allowing learners to continue learning outside the classroom. However, implementation challenges arise, making this sub-element more aligned toward access. Some challenges stem from the recommended language of instruction (the local language of that location), which often conflicts with parents' demands as they want their children to speak English.

Some respondents also highlighted that, whereas theme-based learning is appropriate for learners, the curriculum currently involves handling too many themes beyond the learners' capacity. Moreover, these themes are handled by the same teacher, which is very boring for both teachers and learners and is very cumbersome to the teacher, given the high enrolment rate, especially in public schools. Additionally, some English words do not have a local language equivalent; hence, especially in urban areas and in private schools, English is used as the mode of instruction, and they teach the local language as a subject.

Regarding the transition curriculum, stakeholders revealed it is inappropriate and over-ambitious because the learners find it difficult to quickly switch from the local language, a medium of instruction in lower primary, to English. Learners find subjects strange as they are used to themes in lower primary. This makes the subjects complex and challenging, leading to high dropouts and repetition in this class. Relatedly, teachers shun teaching Primary four and opt for higher classes because they also do not understand the transition curriculum quite well. Indeed, stakeholders indicated that primary four is the most challenging class because of the confusion faced by learners affecting learning outcomes.

Whereas we deemed the upper curriculum appropriate, they pointed it out that it is too theoretical and does not adequately prepare learners to face real-world life after school. Primary teacher noted:

"In upper primary, there is no learning and teaching, just drilling of learners to pass exams."

While the content of the abridged curriculum is rich and appropriate for all learners to develop critical competencies and cover up for what they missed during the COVID-19-induced lockdown, its delivery and implementation are still lacking. The gaps in the delivery arise from the inability to pilot it before they rolled it out in school, lack of adequate training for the implementers, and limited lesson time. Respondents deem the workload too heavy to cover in the recommended 40-minute lessons, and it is not practical given the high school enrolment rates. This has forced some teachers to ignore some important content. Moreover, the sequencing of topics sometimes does not flow, and learners cannot interpret most of the content since most topics are new.

Overall, school leaders and teachers indicated that curriculum completion, as opposed to learners understanding the concepts, is a key focus area for most schools in Uganda. This mainly stems from the pressures of the summative-based assessment that make schools more focused on exam scores. Additionally, extra pressure arises as teachers are often assessed on timely syllabus completion.

Centralization vs local autonomy: local discretion granted to schools or teachers: This sub-element captures the discussion around schools or teachers' ability to choose a mode of instruction or pedagogical techniques that best suit their pupils' needs with system-wide learning goals and expectations. Discussions revealed that public schools have limited discretion over the mode of instruction used in classrooms. Teachers are expected to teach following the methods learned from teacher colleges and/or stipulated in the curriculum. In private schools, teachers have more freedom and are allowed to be innovative as long as the mode of instruction leads to good performance for every learner.

4.2.2 Finance

The finance design element under the management relationship is discussed in four components: how teachers and school inputs are financed and the level of autonomy of schools in allocating resources. The finance element is primarily aligned for access in public schools and selection in private schools. Last, the section examines the extent to which the financing of teachers is aligned with learning goals in schools.

How teachers are financed: This sub-element exhibits elements of selection and access based on the nature of the schools. Generally, the financing of teachers in private schools is aligned for selection as salaries mainly aim at ensuring learners get higher exam scores. In private schools, performing learners (based on exam scores) is the most considered factor in determining teachers' salaries. For instance, at the release of Primary Level examinations, teachers are rewarded financially according to the number of distinctions obtained as a way of motivating/rewarding their outstanding performance. Apart from academic performance, school directors also consider the existing staffing gaps, bargaining power of the teacher (usually determined by performance at the previous schools), experience, and teacher qualifications, among others.

Except in a few private church-based schools, head teachers have limited or no say on their teachers' salaries. This is because private schools are formed as profit-making entities by the school owner.

In government-aided schools, they pay teachers based on the salary structure set by the public service commission as laid out in the compact relationship. However, the scheme of service is rigid and not responsive to changes in teachers' qualifications. For instance, head teachers take a long time to be confirmed as senior education officers and remain in acting capacities for quite a long period. Similarly, teachers who upgrade their qualifications take a long time (an average of seven years) to get promoted. This, therefore, discourages teachers from going for further studies to improve their pedagogical training that would promote learning in schools. It is also important to note that teacher remuneration has little relationship with education goals and is based on years in service. The Government also provides a hard-to-reach allowance (20 percent of the gross salary) to teachers who work in schools in hard-to-reach rural areas.

Besides salaries, some public schools pay allowances to the teachers depending on the remedial lessons administered. Despite these payments, teachers were unanimously unsatisfied with their profession due to low pay compared to other careers. This has affected their teaching morale, resulting in country-wide strikes and demonstrations through their umbrella body UNATU (Uganda National Teachers Union). Owing to this low pay, the teaching profession is not well respected in society, contrary to the times in the past when teachers were well remunerated, built good houses, and took their children to excellent schools. To supplement their incomes, teachers have now taken on side jobs such as retail business, farming, and boda-bodas; however, this affects the time to teach learners in class effectively. Overall, the financing of teachers in public schools is aligned for access.

How inputs are financed: In public schools, school inputs (scholastic materials, classrooms) are financed based on school enrolments and parents' contributions. However, the government system does not capture real-time enrolments in schools even when schools in time submit enrolment data. As such, they provide limited funds to the schools since releases are based on past and outdated enrolment data. The capitation fund released per pupil is relatively low to finance all the learning needs of children in school. Specifically, the government releases only UGX 20,000 (USD 5) per child annually, which translates to UGX 6,666 (USD 1.7) per term. Children just come to school but lack basic scholastic materials to support learning. Relatedly, school infrastructure in public schools is funded by the government through the development facility grant. However, the release of this fund from the central government is irregular. For instance, a school can take five years without receiving that fund. This is because they give this fund to schools with an enormous deficit of facilities. Under this arrangement, District education authorities contract the construction services, whereas the school management repairs the facilities. Overall, the financing of school inputs in public schools in Uganda is aligned for access given that it is based on school enrolments so that all schools can attain just the bare minimum standards

Centralization vs local autonomy – allocating funds: Regarding the schools' discretion in the planning and budget allocation process, school managers and teachers are involved in the planning and budget process of the public funds to the school. The school capitation grant released centrally by the government is based on school enrolment. More succinctly, teachers make up the finance committee which the Deputy Headteacher chairs, while the Headteacher is the ex-official of the committee. This arrangement holds headteachers accountable for spending the centrally released school funds and involve the school staff in the planning process. The finance committee sits every term to make a costed budget of items needed in the school. These items can be classified into five broad categories i.e., administration, management, co-curricular activities, scholastic materials, and contingency. The proposed budget is then submitted to the school management committee that comprises the chairperson (parents), Secretary (Headteacher), community, and opinion leaders. SMC then approves the budget with some revisions where necessary. Upon approval, they then used the budget as a working instrument to guide the accounting officer (headteacher) to make expenditures on behalf of the school management. Broadly, the capitation grant funds don't consider special needs for pupils with disabilities and targeted considerations for girls. However, in some schools, management can use the contingency vote to cater to such requirements. The school managers also have considerable discretion to move funds from one budget vote to another; however, scholastic materials and co-curricular cannot be reallocated to other budget votes. The sub-element is aligned for selection because head teachers exercise given autonomy to reallocate resources over a limited scope of the school budget. School managers are involved at the lower level of planning and budgeting, where most of the financial decisions are already determined.

Accounts versus accounting: Regarding the accounting vis-à-vis accounts component, teachers in public schools are hired to close the existing staffing gaps in the education sector. For instance, the ministry recruits teachers based on quantitative ratios such as the Pupil-teacher and Pupil-classroom ratios in schools. They put limited attention on financing teachers to achieve learning objectives in schools. The rigid and meagre salary structure partly reflects this.

4.2.3 Support

The support element is composed of four sub-elements covering different aspects of the education system. These aspects cover the quality of the instructional materials, coherence between the instructional materials/ training on the same and other design elements, the form of instructional materials and teacher training, and delivery of teacher training. The support element is mostly aligned for access.

Quality of the instructional materials: This sub-element covers areas pertaining to the accessibility, quantity, and ability to modify instructional materials like textbooks and teacher guides. It also examines the nature of training on instructional materials. This sub-element is aligned for access. Unlike private schools, the government, through its distinct entities, provides instructional materials to government schools. However, the respondents noted that they are

usually offered instructional materials in inadequate quantities. This is mainly because as much as the distribution of such materials is based on the enrolments, it doesn't consider current enrolments because of the gap in updating such information. One cited a case where a school of 600 pupils was given two textbooks.

Moreover, the respondents indicated that some of the recommended textbooks have shallow content and are irrelevant since relevant stakeholders like the district education authorities and schools were not consulted in developing and deciding which materials to supply. Distribution errors render instructional materials irrelevant. For instance, cases in Northern Uganda where textbooks are delivered to the wrong schools where a distinct language is used. For example, books meant for Lira schools where Langi is used were delivered to Acholi schools. Another example is where Islamic textbooks are delivered to a Christian school and vice versa. Respondents also noted that some languages, especially for minority groups, are not considered when designing instructional materials. This is the case for the "Lubuisi" in Bundibugyo district.

They also pinpointed commercialization of the printing and distribution of instructional materials as the reason for the compromised quality owing to limited regulation and control of private entities while developing learning materials. This brings in some aspects of patronage as members pointed out examples of publishers such as Macmillan, and Rorash educational publishers, among others, that produce poor quality textbooks and further indicated that some of these publishing companies are owned by government officials who influence the procurement process of distributing learning materials.

It is worth noting that there are also some aspects of learning. For instance, in some districts, especially in the Central urban regions, they provide public schools with enough good-quality learning materials to enable teachers to implement the curriculum. Notably, the pupil-textbook ratio in these schools is 1:1, allowing the learners to follow through with this content during lessons.

Regarding the training on the use of instructional materials, the majority noted that there is no training on the use of instructional materials, and the few who received training cited that this was inadequate and typically follows a cascade model where a few teachers are trained and charged with the responsibility of training others. The Instructional Materials Unit at the Ministry of Education and Sports cited that there are inadequate resources to organize training and highlighted that there has not been training in instructional materials distributed to schools since 2005/2006.

Coherence between the instructional materials/ training and other design elements: This looks at the alignment between the training/instructional materials with other elements, such as the curriculum, exams, and students' learning levels. Primarily, the instructional materials provided through the official government channels are aligned with the curriculum, examinations, and students' learning levels. The Instructional Materials Unit at the MoES follows a stringent quality control process in developing instructional materials, and the curriculum produced by the NCDC

purely guides this. However, some cases were cited where content on the curriculum was left out of the instructional materials supplied. To an extent, this is attributed to the fact that as opposed to pre-qualifying a maximum of five textbooks for distribution to schools as required, where issues of missing content in one can be met by using another textbook, one book (usually the lower-priced one) is now chosen for supply to schools because of limited financial resources. We highlighted some cases of mismatch between the instructional material and student learning levels, as the vocabulary used in some instructional materials is sometimes tricky for learners to interpret. There are cases of private supplies of instructional materials that are not regulated by the MoES and end up producing material that is misaligned with the curriculum, examinations, and students' learning levels.

Form of instructional materials and teacher training: This covers in-service training, the nature of pre-service qualifications, and school/classroom discretion over instructional materials. The sub-element is aligned for access, as shown in the ensuing discussion. The government typically organises in-service training for public schools, often in response to a centralized change, like new policies or curriculum change. For instance, with the outbreak of COVID-19, teachers were trained on handling learners during the post-pandemic situation era. However, in-service trainings are irregularly conducted because of limited central funding for the capacity development component. On the contrary, in some private schools, especially in the central region, in-service training exhibits learning elements as it is conducted based on a needs assessment of teachers to enable them to implement the curriculum and acquire pedagogical skills to deliver lessons.

Concerning the pre-service qualifications, the required qualifications to enter the primary teaching profession are generally standardized. This is the grade three certificate acquired after completing the first level of training at the primary teacher colleges. In a nutshell, there are no specialized pre-service requirements for the different levels of primary school or different subjects. This is regardless of whether one will teach lower or upper primary, science or arts subjects.

Delivery of teacher training: This covers areas concerning the in-service and pre-service training approaches and professional accountability. It is, to a large extent, split between selection and access. With respect to the in-service training, this follows a cascade model because of inadequate resources. With this model, a few representatives are trained on a program of interest, like a new curriculum launch, and then charged with training others. The challenge is that in some schools, no one is trained or only one teacher is trained who, if transferred to another school, the school remains with no trained teacher for that program.

The pre-service training for primary school teachers is typically organized: The course lasts two years. In the first year, usually at the beginning, teacher trainees typically have a month of child study where they visit schools and get an understanding of children's cognitive or psycho-social development. They then have two rounds of teaching practice, each lasting one month, one called semi-final teaching practice at the beginning of the second year of study and the other

called the last teaching practice that happens towards the end of the second year. Therefore, there are three months of practical training for the two years spent in the course. Teachers noted that the time allocated to practical training is not enough given the amount of work to be done, such as preparing schemes of work, lesson plans, and instructional materials.

In a nutshell, it was noted that because of limited time and funding allocated for pre-service training, the quality of teachers going out to practice the teaching profession is poor (some teachers called them "half-baked teachers"). Most of the time, teachers leave the teacher training colleges without understanding the basic professional knowledge, such as developing the schemes of work. In addition, it was showed that the subjects offered in the teacher training colleges are too many (over 13 subjects). These involve a lot of revision of what was covered at the secondary level, especially for science subjects. Some teachers in the host schools of the training don't provide teaching opportunities to the student teachers and frequently crush them for fear of taking up their jobs. This also affects the quality of the pre-service training.

There were a few differences between government, and private schools regarding professional accountability. In government schools, teachers noted that about 70 percent of teachers do not receive supervision from school leaders. All the leaders usually ask for are the schemes of work and lesson plans without supervising what goes on in class. In contrast, teachers from private schools noted that school leaders often supervise because of external pressures from school owners and parents.

4.2.4 Information

Information, as a design element, details the indicators that the principal uses to measure how well the agent has performed their tasks. Under the management relationship, the design element comprises the following sub-elements: Education Management Information System (EMIS), Exams purpose, Exam design (curriculum-exam alignment), Accounts Vs accounting for school leaders and teachers, and Information use. The information element is aligned for both access and selection with some learning features, as explained below.

Most critical information sought by MoES from schools: Under this sub-element, we sought to understand the most critical information that the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) sought from schools across the different regions. The study findings indicate that, through school inspections, the ministry mainly focuses on the following information:

Student enrollment and attendance in the school. Under this, inspectors are usually interested in the number of girls and boys per class and their attendance rate. Inspectors examine learners' attendance records to get a feel of absenteeism and dropout rates.

Other inputs, such as school infrastructure, especially the classrooms, and sanitary facilities like toilets/latrines, are given attention during school visits. Respondents indicated that such information is key since it is a requirement for every school to have these facilities, and without them, it is against the law to have the school running.

According to the inspectors, staff attendance, lesson plans, and schemes of work records are among the most required in-class information. This is because, for learning to take place, not only is a teacher's presence key but also how prepared he/she is to teach. Notably, while such information is critical for the ministry to understand how classes are conducted/what takes place inside the classroom, respondents in most regions indicated that inspectors only ask about the availability of lesson plans and schemes of work. Very few of them get to see the actual documents, let alone determine whether teachers use them appropriately. A headteacher noted:

"Most inspectors come with an inspection guide with items they should ask about already listed. But the detail of determining whether an ongoing lesson is as per the lesson plan is still missing. In most schools, inspectors only stop at the head teachers' office, and no the on-ground verification is done to ensure that all the items on the inspection guide are present."

They cited several challenges in the inspection process, which resulted in the highlighted inadequate/haphazard inspection and, sometimes, no inspection at all in some schools. For example, the limited facilitation offered to inspectors, and the small number of inspectors per region are not commensurate with the number of schools. Additionally, there are corrupt tendencies of private school owners who offer money to inspectors for a good inspection report about their schools.

Indeed, it was noted that poor school inspection could be attributed to the reason behind the inspection. For instance, inspectors use some inspections as a source of money, as they visit particular schools only when a monetary payment is expected from the school leaders. Additionally, some visits aim at malicious intentions against a particular staff member. In such a case, they do inspections to target a particular teacher/head teacher so that they can identify a culpable concern that makes a transfer for such a person becomes inevitable.

Nonetheless, in very few instances (for example, in Buhweju district in western Uganda), respondents noted inspectors do detailed inspections, and they provide inspection reports. The respondents noted that the District Education Officer of Buhweju ensures that proper inspection is done mainly for political reasons. Poor school performance could cause his failure to get into the next term in office since education is one of the key contributions of a politician in Buhweju district. This sub-element of information confirms that there is an alignment between access and patronage in Uganda's education sector.

Exam Purpose: Different stakeholders revealed that the main reason for administering exams is to prepare learners for high stake exams at the end of the primary cycle. As earlier noted, the purpose of frequent examinations, which is common in private schools, is to get learners accustomed to the exams that are expected to be set in PLE, i.e., to understand the question approach.

Exams also aim to encourage competition among learners in the same class. This is done by ranking learners according to their performance and allocating them to streams according to their performance. For example, a stream for cream (top performers) and a stream for the

average. The study findings indicate that they do this so that learners who are not performing well can look up to their counterparts who have high exam scores so that they can join their streams in the subsequent term.

Furthermore, our results reveal that they do specific exams in schools to test memorization of content. For instance, the beginning of Term exams measures the learners' ability to retain the information they were taught during the previous term. Exams are also used to determine whether a learner is ready for the next class, should repeat the class, or be pushed to a lower class.

We also identified some traces of learning. In some schools, based on performance in a particular subject, they catered to the poor performers through remedial lessons, more revisions, and counseling to perform better in upcoming exams. In other instances, exams are used to test different teaching methods, identify areas of weakness among learners and devise means of addressing them. For example, they could advise a learner to repeat a class, seek parents' intervention in the learner's academic performance, employ a resource person from another school, reallocate teachers or opt for co-teaching to boost exam scores. This still points to an alignment for selection, and to a small extent, alignment for learning as consideration is given to the poor performers in some schools.

Exam Design (Exam-curriculum alignment): As previously discussed, many curricula run concurrently in the primary cycle. Interestingly, each of the above curricula was described as "only good on paper". This implies that, while the content of the curricula is excellent and meant to bring up holistic learners, its applicability is still lacking because of several reasons, such as inadequate training of teachers on curriculum delivery and insufficient copies provided by the ministry to the schools, among others. Respondents indicated that, while the abridged curriculum encourages learners' formative assessment, all schools are still using summative assessments through administering termly exams because of pressures from parents. The kind of exams administered to learners at the primary level is not properly aligned with the curriculum. A head teacher noted:

"The curriculum requires us to give exams to learners only at the end of the year, not on a term basis. However, termly exams are the only way of providing accountability to parents. End-of-term exams are the only way to prove to parents that learning has been taking place at school. So we still give termly exams even when the curriculum says otherwise".

The exams that learners are subjected to are not in line with syllabus coverage or topic alignment as per the curriculum. This is because they have left the setting of exams to the private sector. Public schools also adopted using private examination bureaus in order to compete favorably with their private counterparts. Private exam-setting bureaus such as Prime and Sipro set exams without knowledge of how far the teachers have gone regarding syllabus coverage. The respondents pointed out that questions from topics that are supposed to be covered in the third term are sometimes set in the second or first term, which results in high failure rates. These

examinations rarely balance out questions and focus more on the lower-order levels of cognitive demand, i.e., the knowledge level, which involves memorization other than comprehension. This points to an alignment for access for this sub-element.

Regarding the lower primary curriculum, stakeholders indicated that there are incoherences in the language recommended by the curriculum (local languages) and English being the dominant language of instruction, especially in most private schools and the most preferred by most parents. While the lower primary curriculum recommends using respective local languages when teaching, the exams are set in English. Parents consider their children's ability to use English as an indicator of learning. Worse still, some children use English back at home and in pre-primary and transitioning to local languages when they join primary one makes implementing the curriculum difficult. The multi-lingual classes worsened this, where the entire class cannot understand one local language as noted by a teacher:

"A class can have a mixture of over five tribes. Teaching such a class would require using one common language, and we resort to using English to deliver a curriculum that emphasizes teaching in local languages."

Accounts Vs Accounting for school leadership and teachers: This sub-element is largely aligned for selection and access. It examines the basis upon which school leadership and teacher performance are evaluated. The study findings reveal that good teaching and school leadership is mainly judged by the school's performance, especially in high stake exams (PLE).

Regarding teachers, they evaluate their performance based on how the subject they teach is performed at PLE (for candidate classes) and performance in term exams for lower classes. It was also noted that other indicators, such as attendance records, lesson plans, schemes of work, classroom, and time management might be considered during their appraisals. However, the latter indicators are only given attention when pupils are not performing well in a particular subject for which the teacher is responsible. In some instances, teachers' performance is judged on duties or activities assigned to them, for example, the week when a teacher is on duty, a class teacher, among others.

Regarding school leadership, in addition to the schools' performance in PLE, school leaders are also judged based on their ability to manage the available financial resources, the presence of functional committees such as the Parent-Teacher Association and the School Management Committee, security of the school, hygiene and sanitation, and discipline/conduct of the learners, among others.

Information Use: As earlier mentioned, learners' performance is at the forefront of every decision made in all schools. Indeed, the majority of information collected from school's aims at deciding improvement in performance in PLE. For example, stakeholders reported that a head teacher could be transferred from one school to another based on the number of distinctions they can generate from PLE exams. Teacher placement, demotion, promotion, and teaching methods are some decisions implemented in most schools to improve grades obtained in

national exams. Good teaching (based on exam scores) is rewarded in most schools, especially private ones. This points to the alignment for selection that was earlier pointed out.

Information from inspection reports, annual school census, and Education statistical abstracts is mainly used for planning purposes. The MoES draws on such information especially when making budget allocation decisions.

4.2.5 Motivation

This design element exhibits characteristics of alignment with access, selection, and patronage. The design element contains two sub-elements that cover intrinsic and extrinsic motivation issues. Intrinsic motivation mostly focuses on the teacher's professional status, whereas extrinsic motivation focuses on factors that influence the teacher's career advancement and job security.

Intrinsic motivation: Overall, this sub-element is aligned toward selection and access. Teaching is considered a low-status job as it has low rewards, often joined as a last resort because of financial constraints, poor academic performance, and family influences. The teaching profession is primarily disrespected in the community. Unlike in the past, when the teaching profession was more rewarding, recruitment of poor performers has affected the quality of teaching and learning, and the social acceptability of the profession has deteriorated. However, a few teachers joined the profession as a calling because they admired teachers and viewed them as custodians of knowledge, hence doing it out of passion.

On the choice between administrative and teaching positions, an overwhelming number of school leaders and teachers noted that administrative positions such as being a head teacher are more desirable than teaching positions because of the less workload with higher remuneration, more respect, ability to delegate responsibilities, given priority in case of training, among others. This further highlights the low motivation levels in the teaching profession at the primary level.

Extrinsic motivation: This sub-element covers issues about teachers' career structures. This includes entry, exit, placement, appraisal, and promotion. Extrinsic motivation fits three different alignments, i.e., selection, access, and patronage. However, with some differences between government and private schools. Decisions regarding teacher career structures are usually based on performance, qualification, and experience; however, with varying degrees for government and private schools. Whereas in government schools, those mentioned above are considered, respondents pointed out certain characteristics of patronage, which often override the above factors. These included elements of politics, tribalism, and corruption. For example, increasingly, especially with the decentralization of teacher hiring to the district level, we are observing elements of patronage/special interest where the relationship with key hiring stakeholders is put ahead of qualifications and merit when hiring, promoting, and placing teachers.

The enrolments and the number of years that the teacher has spent in a certain school were key emerging determinants of teacher career structures in government schools, espousing alignment for access. Hiring, promotion, and firing of teachers in private schools mainly depend on

performance/exam scores obtained by learners, especially in Primary Leaving Examinations/former schools of teaching. In addition, there is a focus on the budget in making such decisions pointing to the fact that extrinsic motivation in private schools is mainly aligned for selection.

4.3 Voice and Choice

The voice and choice relationship depicts components of both access and selection, as summarized in table 3 below and discussed in the following sections.

Table 3: Summary of the key findings in the Voice and Choice relationship

Element	Sub-element ¹	Key findings
Delegation	What do parents want?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents prioritise academic performance for private and public schools, especially in high-stakes exams, when choosing schools for their children. Additionally, parents look at school dues, especially in private schools, proximity to the school, and the school's physical appearance, etc.
	Do parents play a role in school management and governance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The involvement of parents depends on the school. Voice is stronger in public schools because of functioning school governing bodies, such as PTAs and SMCs than in private schools. Parents are also involved more in school management than in governance.
	Whose voice? To what degree is there internal community cohesion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In schools where PTAs and SMCs exist and are functional, these bodies do not adequately represent the voices of the majority. They also reflected this in the criteria for choosing representatives on these bodies, which include parents' education level, socioeconomic status, and competence levels.
Finance	Does the local level have some discretion over financing for education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents in public schools have a weaker voice on the spending of capitation grants because of limited information about these funds. Parents in public schools only follow up on private contributions from the PTA fund.

¹ Support is not included in the voice and choice relationship because parents do not have the technical competencies to offer the kind of support in the form of in-service and pre-service training that teachers need to carry out their tasks.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In private schools, parents do not have any say regarding the school fees they pay, especially if their children get high exam scores.
	What information is used to inform financing decisions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents prioritize financing learners' general welfare in public schools, such as feeding, sanitary facilities, etc. • In private schools, financing decisions made by parents aim to improve children's performance.
Information	Do standardized exams provide regular, reliable, relevant information on learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A termly report is the primary information schools provide to parents to show that learning is taking place. • Parents put the most emphasis on exam scores from different sets of exams (beginning and End of the term) in the reports. • However, such scores are unreliable because of cheating tendencies among schools, and most parents also agree that a mark is not a relevant measure of learning.
	Beyond standardized exams, do families get other accounts of whether their child is learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly and monthly exams are administered to learners, especially in private schools and results from the same are presented to parents on special school days such as visitation days. • Some traces of learning, e.g., participation in co-curricular activities, speech days, and talent exhibition days, were reported, especially in public schools where parents demand them.
Motivation	Do parents have some discretion over teacher career structures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In public schools, parents have no say in teacher hiring, as this is the responsibility of the education service commission. Parents have some say in teacher transfer and discipline. • In private schools, voice has a minor role regarding teacher career structures as the directors' decision overpowers all the rest.
	What information is used to inform judgments about school leadership/school choice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In private and government schools, decisions taken by parents/communities regarding teacher careers are mainly based on learners' performance in P.L.E. • In rural schools, such decisions may be based on teachers' discipline. • Other information includes respect for the teacher/headteacher in the community, enrolment, teacher attendance, children's oratory skills etc.

4.3.1 Delegation

The element of delegation under voice and choice is comprised of three sub-elements. These cover perspectives of what parents want, if the bureaucracy allows a voice in school governance and management, and to what degree there is internal community cohesion. This design element is aligned for selection to a large extent.

What do parents want? This sub-element examines what parents base on to evaluate the quality and choose schools for their children. From our discussions with parents and other stakeholders, this is primarily aligned for selection. This is because parents mainly prioritize academic performance. They look at how a school has been performing in PLE over the years when choosing schools for their children. Some parents also look at the cost of education in terms of how much school fees are, but in most cases, if a school is performing well, especially in private schools, parents will pay any amount. On the other hand, parents from public schools are satisfied with their children going to school but aim to have their children perform in the best way they can.

Voice and choice are also aligned for access sometimes. For example, some parents prioritize the proximity of the school from home and its physical appearance, such as classrooms, sanitary facilities, fences, etc. In contrast, to some parents, large numbers enrolled in a particular school imply that the school is doing well and thus can base their choices on such factors.

Do parents play a role in school management and governance? This sub-element covers parents' participation in school governance and management. Findings show that involvement in governance depends on the nature of the school. In private schools, voice is not strong enough and/or non-existent regarding governance and management issues. School governing bodies such as PTAs and SMCs (in which parents should take part) only exist as a fulfillment of government requirements by MoES but are not functional. Besides, the school owners who choose friends who will front their profit-making agenda appointed the members in such bodies for privately owned schools. In public schools, parents are involved in governance (to a small extent) but more in the management of schools through PTAs and SMCs, hence pointing toward alignment for access. Stakeholders noted that parents' voice in school management are much stronger compared to governance. Several respondents noted:

"In government schools, parents are the ones that almost own the schools because no major decisions are made without convening PTAs and SMCs meetings which not only represent parents but start with consultations with parents at the Annual General Meetings (AGMs)".

Notably, the voice of the community and traditional leaders are aligned for access. This is because they are much more involved in mobilising parents to send their children to school by encouraging them to provide the required school materials and punishing parents whose children do not go to school. They block children from market areas and trading centres to ensure they attend school.

Whose voice - To what degree is there internal community cohesion: This sub-element discusses whether the voices of parent representatives through PTAs and SMCs represent the voices of the majority or minority. We note that in schools where PTAs and SMCs exist and are functional, these bodies do not adequately represent the views of most parents, as voiced below by parents:

"In meetings, management plants some parents to support its agenda, and not everyone is given a chance to speak, especially if they know you are likely to oppose. For example, if they want to increase school fees, they will go through a few parents and bribe them before the meeting to bring such an idea to the discussion table at the General meeting".

The criteria usually followed in selecting representatives to the PTAs further reflect that these associations represent the voices of a few parents suggesting an alignment toward selection. These criteria include the parent's education level, socio-economic status, and competence level (in terms of mobilizing parents, an oversight role in managing finances, calling meetings, and reigning in on headteachers).

4.3.2 Finance

We discuss the finance element under the voice and choice relationship using two main sub-elements, i.e., if the local level has some discretion over financing for education and the nature of the information used to inform financing decisions. The finance design element is aligned for access.

Does the local level have some discretion over financing for education: Parents in public schools have a weaker voice on the spending of capitation grants. Whereas the School Management Committee (SMC) is involved in the planning and budgeting process of the schools, these bodies do not represent the views of all the parents in the affairs of the school but their selfish motives. For instance, the head teachers in some public schools connive with the chairpersons of the SMC or the treasurer, and they misuse the capitation funds released from the government. Relatedly, parents have no say over teacher salaries in all public schools. This is because teachers on the payroll receive their salaries directly from the public service commission. The school management or the head teachers have no authority to withhold teacher salaries.

There is no or limited induction provided to SMCs, which affects their parents' participation in the financing and budgeting processes of the schools. Leaders of SMCs argue it is difficult to represent all parents' views in the financing decisions of the school. Instead, they suggest schools get parents' views by setting up a suggestions box. Parents decision-making is limited only to the non-salary re-current budget of the school. In private schools, SMCs are essentially non-functional and therefore constituted for formality to meet government requirements. In this case, if there is any misappropriation of funds by school owners, parents have no avenue and power to question such mismanagement.

SMCs and PTAs in public schools have limited say on the finances because the decision-making process takes a top-bottom approach, not a bottom-top structure. The latter approach would

provide an opportunity for all parents to be at the forefront of the decision-making process in school. Instead of parents forwarding their ideas to the school, the SMCs impose their ideas on the parents. This, therefore, undermines their financial views in the school's management. There are notable variations in the strength of the voice of parents across the urban-rural divide. In urban-based public schools, parents don't demand accountability, as they mainly focus on their children's performance.

In contrast, most rural parents demand accountability for their hard-earned monies paid at school. In most primary schools, parents have limited say on the school facility grant because of limited information on these funds. Most parents don't know that this fund exists. Instead, parents mostly follow up on private contributions such as school and remedial fees, which they feel entitled to know. Regarding the capitation grant, parents have more say on the contingency budget vote because they believe it is redundant and can be used for any other emerging issues. The strength of the voice of parents in primary schools is aligned for selection. The parents have limited, or no say over, the financing decisions of the school. They exercise the limited say through SMCs, and PTAs, which mostly represent selfish interests, not the views of all the parents in the school.

What information is used to inform financing decisions: In most public schools, parents prioritize financing the feeding of learners to promote pupils' learning in school. They also highly prioritize initiatives to improve their children's welfare, such as providing breakfast and lunch for them. In most private schools, financing decisions (for instance, funding remedial lessons) made by parents are aimed at enabling children to pass high stake exams such as the Mock and PLE. Parents consider extra classes the teacher offers when making financing decisions for schools. School enrolment informs financing in government schools as opposed to the learning needs of students. Relatedly, financing decisions are mainly aimed at building structures to promote access to education for learners. The alignment of voice and choice in public schools focuses on access to enable children to continue attending school with a limited focus on achieving learning outcomes. In private schools, it focuses on selection.

4.3.3 Information

Do standardized exams provide regular, reliable, relevant information on learning? The leading information that all primary schools provide to parents to show what takes place at school is a termly report. The main content in the end-of-term reports is the learners' performance, as indicated by the scores in the exams done at the end of the term. Additionally, schools (the class teacher and the head teacher) briefly comment on the learners' behavioral conduct at school. Some reports further provide information regarding the next term, for example, we expect the requirements that parents to provide to learners and the reporting day.

However, there are variations between private and public schools in the number of assessments considered at the end of the term. For instance, while most public schools mainly do two sets of exams (beginning of term and end of term) at most, private schools subject learners (especially

those in higher classes, mainly primary seven) to several exams, usually mid-term, monthly and sometimes weekly in the bid to get them used to answer exam questions in preparation for the PLE. The availability of financial resources in private schools may explain this variation. As noted by one of the respondents:

"The more you examine a learner, the more they get used to answering the kind of questions that are likely to be set in P.L.E. Private schools have leveraged the availability of financial resources provided by parents to purchase all the exams that are on the market plus those done in different schools and different regions. Doing so many assessments increases the likelihood that they may repeat some questions in the national exams, increasing learners' performance."

Most parents emphasise the grades/exam scores in the report compared to the rest of the content. The respondents indicated that most parents are illiterate and can barely understand the information provided by schools. Thus, they mainly focus on their children's positions in class and, sometimes, the marks obtained in the different subjects. Sometimes, they seek assistance for them to understand their grades. Worse still, even some literate parents cannot comprehend the grades/ grading system used.

The above findings indicate that parents' desire for good grades in the national exams has acted as a push factor for schools to do whatever is within their means to satisfy their clients' (mainly parents) demands. This points to the quality of learners sent out to the secondary level and raises questions on the reliability of the assessments provided to parents.

Stakeholders showed that parents' demand for distinctions has resulted in increasing cases of cheating in national exams. The reliability of such information is thus not guaranteed since the grades obtained by a learner may not be the genuine reflection of their capabilities.

In 2020, a local newspaper (Daily Monitor) reported that:

"There never seems to be an end to exam malpractice. Every time national exam results are released, there is always a portion of results withheld because of malpractice, and of course, those culprits get away with the vice".

Worse still, cheating is common even in the termly exams, especially in private schools where good scores are used to attract more learners into the school. Teachers in private schools indicated that:

"Directors of private schools are after presenting high scores to parents. Teachers are forced to forge/inflate marks, with the objective of not presenting poor performance to parents because they may transfer their children to other schools, or they may not bring more children to the same school due to low grades. In some instances, teachers do the exams together with the learners. Also, teachers, especially those in the lower primary where learners use pencils, mark exam scripts with rubbers so that if a learner has written a wrong answer, the teacher can easily rub it and write the correct answer."

"In some schools, the administrators, especially the Director of Studies, discuss an exam with the learners prior to giving it to them. This is common when the administrator is in charge of a particular subject in a class because it is shameful for a whole director of studies to have his subject under-performed."

Besides parents' demand for top grades, the use of learners' grades as appraisal tools for teachers is also responsible for the forging of exam scores by most teachers, especially in private schools. Teachers in different regions indicated that their performance is judged based on trends in learners' performance, and then they are forced to present good grades to the directors, whether or not they are true.

On the side of parents also noted that they sometimes doubt the reliability of the information provided by schools about their children's performance. One parent narrated that she often tries to ask her child the same questions they initially passed in the exams, and the child's failure to attempt them leaves her worried. A parent noted:

"I was disappointed when I requested my primary three children to write the word 'book', marked right in the script, and the child could not write it. From then onwards, I started doubting the marks written on the scripts and in the report. I resorted to extra teaching for my child during the holidays to cover up such gaps and bring my child up to speed."

Findings reveal that a child could have excellent marks on their scripts but are not doing well in other aspects of life. Indeed, most of the respondents indicated that a mark is/cannot be a measure of learning given the highlighted instances, such as exam malpractice. As such, marks are not a relevant measure of learning. Respondents added that a mark is, in most cases, not an accurate reflection of what the child has learned in school but what they have crammed. This was confirmed when school heads reported that during the admission of learners into the secondary level, preference/priority is given to learners from government schools since exam malpractice is more common in private schools. As such, learners from government primary schools are more trusted (in terms of their capabilities) even when they have poorer grades compared to those from private schools with much higher grades. The priority given to exam scores is an indication of an education system that is aligned for selection.

Beyond standardized exams, do families get other accounts of whether their child is learning:

As earlier noted, beyond standardized exams such as the beginning of term, mid and end-of-term assessments, some schools administer weekly and monthly exams to their learners. These results are usually provided to parents on specified days, such as visitation days. It is important to note that these assessments mainly focus on the child's academic performance, leaving out other aspects of learning, such as performance in co-curricular activities that are part of the curriculum. As such, schools have resorted to encouraging cram work and memorization as they prepare learners for national exams. This further confirms that Uganda's education system is aligned for selection since performance in any assessment is the principal focus.

However, some traces of learning were reported by a few stakeholders. For example, participation in co-curricular activities such as Music, Dance, and Drama (MDD), speech days, talent exhibition days, etc., are some other accounts provided by schools to parents to help them know that their children are learning. These are common in public schools where parents easily demand such activities.

In addition, according to parents, behavioral change and talent recognition in children are indicators of learning.

"If I am invited to my child's school to attend speech day, and I see my child ably and confidently expressing him/herself in public, then I would know that learning is taking place at school. Secondly, if there are things that my child could not do before joining the school, and now she is able to do them, then I can tell that the child is picking up this good behavior from school, for example, the self-drive that comes with the school routine is an indicator of learning."

4.3.4 Motivation

The motivation design element under the voice and choice relationship comprises two sub-elements. These are the strength of voice and alignment of voice and choice. Strength of voice examines the level of discretion that the principals (such as parents and community leaders) have over the teacher/head teacher career structures covering issues pertaining to the principal's role in teacher hiring, firing, placement, appraisal, promotion, etc. Alignment of voice and choice further discusses the information the principals used to justify decisions regarding teacher/headteacher career structures.

Do parents have some discretion over teacher career structures? This sub-element is, to a large extent, aligned for selection and access with elements of patronage, depending on whether the school is public or private. In public schools, principals have no say in hiring teachers as it is done centrally by the government's Education Service Commission. However, they have some say regarding the transfer and disciplining of teachers/head teachers. For example, parents and communities can quickly push for an immediate transfer of a teacher/headteacher implicated in defiling a pupil or drunkard-ness and insubordination. Sometimes, parents show their dissatisfaction with a teacher by demonstrating and demanding that the person leaves the school immediately. However, the degree of the strength of parents and communities in influencing teacher career structures also varies with whether the school is in an urban or rural setting. Parents in urban settings have a stronger voice, and their recommendations for teacher transfer are usually more acted on than those in rural schools. As earlier discussed, some public schools, through their PTAs and SMCs, privately hire additional staff funded through the PTA fund. In such instances, parents have a direct and more decisive role in hiring, firing, and promoting such teachers. Following this discussion, the strength of voice is aligned mainly for selection in public schools.

Concerning private schools, voice has minor role regarding the teacher career structures because the school director's/owner's decisions are paramount in such situations. Whereas parents can influence the director to fire the teacher/head teacher based on information coming from children, the school director has the final say. However, some private schools (especially profit-oriented schools) listen to parents so much that they would rather lose a teacher than students. In this regard, the strength of voice broadly aligns with access in private schools.

What information is used to inform judgments about school leadership/school choice? This is aligned for selection because, in both government and private schools, decisions taken by parents/communities regarding teacher careers are justified mainly based on learners' performance in examinations, especially PLE. However, in rural schools, in some settings, the teacher's discipline, i.e., if a teacher is implicated in defiling a pupil or is a drunkard, supersedes performance. Other criteria that inform parents'/communities' decisions include respect for the teacher/head teacher in the community, enrolment, teacher attendance, children's oratory skills, and teachers' relationship with the children and the parents. These criteria point to alignment for access.

5. INCOHERENCES WITHIN THE SYSTEM

Incoherences within the compact relationship

A significant incoherence that arises in this relationship is between delegation and finance. Incoherences within the compact relationship arise from what state executive, legislative and fiduciary authorities delegate to education authorities, how the state authorities evaluate the performance of the education authorities on delegated tasks and how the state authorities finance the education authorities to deliver the delegated tasks. Whereas the state authorities delegate provision of quality, equitable and relevant education to the education authorities, the education authorities are often under-funded to carry out these tasks. The reducing level of public expenditure as a share of the national budget and GDP since FY 2014/15 illustrates these phenomena. Insufficient or delayed funding is often cited as the reason for several incomplete priorities by the MoES.

Incoherences within the management relationship

This section highlights incoherences in what the education authorities delegate to frontline providers, the financial resources that frontline providers receive to carry out these tasks, how supported they are to carry out the tasks, what information education authorities use to hold the frontline providers accountable, and how frontline providers are motivated. A couple of incoherence arise within the management relationship, as discussed below.

Beyond the limited financial resource envelope that schools and teachers receive to carry out delegated tasks, a major source of incoherence arises from the delegated tasks from the different authorities. NCDC delegates to schools and teachers to deliver the curriculum designed to

achieve mastery of the concepts and content. UNEB delegates to schools and teachers to prepare and present ready pupils for the Primary Leaving Examinations. Whereas NCDC focuses on curriculum mastery, UNEB focuses on assessing learners, albeit with some shortcomings, because of poor coordination between the two entities. This has been a source of contradiction for schools and teachers on where they should focus. For example, whereas the curriculum provides practical lessons for different levels such as Music, Dance, and Drama (MDD), sports, and gardening, they do not account for these on the school timetables since they are not examinable.

Because the UNEB assessment often focuses on lower-order levels of cognitive demand that encourage more memorization than content and concept mastery, it has encouraged what teachers referred to as delivery of the curriculum in an examination format where they teach the curriculum through questions. This is further depicted in the delivery of the recently adopted abridged curriculum, which emphasizes formative assessment through continuous assessment instead of summative assessment. However, because schools are charged with preparing pupils for examinations, they have continued to give pupils traditional exams as before to prepare them for the PLE because they know that ultimately performance at PLE will be used to evaluate their performance even if the abridged curriculum discouraged examinations. This situation is worsened by the increasing commercialization of the education sector which has caused unhealthy competition and a focus on examination grades at the cost of content mastery. This is depicted for example in the increasing dependence on private examination bureaus for examinations that are often misaligned with the curriculum and learning levels of the pupils. Moreover, the weak supervision of schools and teachers has also exacerbated the situation.

Concerning support, whereas NCDC expects the schools and teachers to deliver the curriculum, there are often gaps in training these teachers on the curricula, as previously discussed. They are usually equipped with limited and/or poorly designed instructional material like textbooks and teaching guides, making it challenging to deliver the curriculum as intended. A case in point is the thematic curriculum, which, since its launch in 2003-2004, still has some misunderstandings surrounding its delivery. In our discussions with different teachers, several cited not receiving sufficient training because of the cascade model adopted during the training. This brings further challenges when the trained teacher is transferred to another school, leaving a skills gap.

Similarly, for the abridged curriculum, several teachers, especially in rural areas, cited that they were never trained with the rollout of the curriculum. In contrast, some private school teachers until now do not know what this curriculum looks like and what instructional materials to use and yet are expected to deliver it. These realities have often affected how teachers adopt and embrace new curricula, a major source of incoherence in service delivery.

Beyond in-service training, pre-service training offered at Primary Teacher's Colleges (PTCs) is also, to an extent, poorly aligned with the curriculum. This is mainly because there is no specialization in PTCs depending on the level that one will teach, and the language of instruction is English, regardless of where or what level one will teach. As discussed earlier, the thematic curriculum for the lower primary has a local language policy that requires the language of

instruction to be the language spoken by most pupils in that location. If one is going to teach lower primary, they are then expected to do schemes of work and instruct in the local language of the area where they are located without having prior training on how to do this.

Regarding information, education authorities often rely on limited indicators that hardly measure learning to evaluate the performance of schools and teachers on delegated tasks. For example, whereas the MoES delegates delivering quality education to schools and teachers, they primarily focus on thin quality indicators, especially performance at PLE. Similarly, many inspectors do not collect detailed information on instructional content and practices in the classroom, limiting NCDC's complete evaluation of curriculum delivery.

Incoherences between management and Voice and Choice relationship

This section highlights incoherence between what the education authorities delegate to schools and teachers in the management relationship and what parents' delegate to schools and teachers in the voice and choice relationship. One source of incoherence is differences in what the NCDC requires of schools in terms of curriculum delivery, specifically for lower primary and some criteria that parents want to see schools deliver to the children and subsequently use to judge the performance of a school. As discussed, the lower primary curriculum emphasizes the use of the local language. However, discussions with parents revealed that one thing parents prioritize and want from schools is the ability of the child to speak English, hence bringing about conflict for schools and teachers. This has led to some schools, especially private schools, completely disregarding the local language and emphasizing English to satisfy the demands of the parents.

Similarly, another case of conflicting demands from NCDC and parents is the abridged curriculum that emphasizes more continuous assessment rather than summative examinations. However, since parents require accountability from schools as regular pen and paper examinations, schools have been pressured to continue subjecting the pupils to such examinations instead of the recommended continuous and formative assessments. This further highlights the focus of the primary education system on pass rates that do not reflect curriculum mastery and learning gains.

6. CONCLUSION AND POLICY ACTIONS

Despite progress made in improving access to education, Uganda continues to grapple with a severe learning crisis. Children are achieving more years of schooling but without mastering essential competencies for their levels of education.

Overall, primary education in Uganda aims to achieve different goals other than learning for all children in the system. Most components in the system aim to achieve selection with a focus on a few deserving pupils, especially the topmost performers. Several components also aim at achieving access where the focus is on minimum inputs like enrolment, transition, completion, etc. but without priority on the quality of learning.

Different parts of the primary education system contradict each other. Whereas the top priority of the state authorities is delivering quality education, the sector is often faced with financing challenges to meet the delegated tasks. There is a mismatch between the tasks that NCDC and UNEB delegate to the schools and teachers, which often causes challenges in learning delivery and tilts the system toward achieving selection. This mismatch is brought about because of a lack of explicit coordination between the NCDC and UNEB. Whereas NCDC requires schools and teachers to deliver the curriculum to achieve content mastery, teachers are often not adequately trained to do so, causing a mismatch between the system elements of delegation and support. Pressures from parents who instead rate performance and other indicators such as the ability to speak English exacerbate this, further pressuring schools and teachers to satisfy such needs at the expense of content mastery.

In order to improve the quality of education and tackle the learning crisis at the primary level, the following actions are proposed:

Improve school-based in-service training led by Center Coordinating Tutors and head teachers. Teachers are key stakeholders in the education sector, and the interaction between teachers and pupils is key to ensuring learning. The government needs to enhance in-service training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to achieve a leap from schooling to quality teaching and learning and overcome incoherences in teacher training observed within the management relationship (For more on this, see “Form of instructional materials and teacher training” and “delivery of teacher training” in Section 4.2.3). For example, allocate sufficient funds to that area and ensure that such training is conducted based on a needs assessment and continuously as opposed to only when there is a major change. This should be accompanied by improving teacher motivation (See motivation under the management relationship in Section 4.2.5), primarily through enhanced compensation packages. This will ensure that quality teaching is attracted to and retained in the sector.

Improve the effectiveness of community-based structures to strengthen their supervisory functions. Structures like SMCs, PTAs, and community leaders are on the ground and know the frontline providers' traditions and norms compared to the MoES, UNEB, or NCDC. These need to be sensitized on their roles and empowered to effectively monitor and supervise the teaching and learning processes to ensure that learning is achieved (For more, see “Do parents play a role in school management and governance?” in Section 4.3.1). This is not only reasonable given that these structures are already existent though non-functional, but also empowering these structures would cost-effectively strengthen the inspection function of MoES.

Regulate commercialization in the sector that is contributing to the worsening learning crisis. To overcome the exam-curriculum misalignment within the management relationship, exam-setting bureaus such as Prime and Sipro should be brought under one umbrella body that must be supervised and regulated by the MoES to ensure that the exams they are setting are the appropriate ones for a term and class (For more on this, see “Exam Design (Exam-curriculum alignment) in Section 4.2.4.). Similarly, publishers of learning materials like textbooks and

pamphlets should be adequately supervised by the relevant bodies to ensure that the content is up to date and matches what is in the curriculum for every class (See “quality of the instructional material” and “Coherence between the instructional materials/ training and other design elements” in Section 4.2.3). Furthermore, MoES should regularly supervise and regulate private schools to curb the tendency of doing "anything" for marks and grades, creating unnecessary competition in the sector to the detriment of learners.

Ensure coordination among different stakeholders. Effective coordination among different stakeholders is essential to re-align the system toward learning. Stakeholders/institutions, such as MoES, NCDC, and UNEB need to work closely to set the goals for frontline providers to eliminate incoherence. Additionally, there is a need to engage parents throughout different system changes to ensure they embrace them (See Delegation under the management relationship in Section 4.2.1 and under the voice and choice relationship in Section 4.3.1).

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ANNEX

Table A1: Districts from which workshop participants were selected

Region	Meeting point	Selected Districts
Eastern	Mbale	Mbale Soroti Kamuli Jinja Kapchorwa
South-Western	Mbarara	Mbarara Buhweju Isingiro Kanungu Kabale
Western	Fortportal	Fortportal Kamwenge Kasese Bundibugyo
West Nile	Arua	Arua Nebbi Yumbe Adjumani
Northern	Gulu	Gulu Kitgum Lira Apac Amuru
Central	Masaka	Masaka Sembabule Mubende Kalangala Rakai
Kampala	Kampala	Kampala Mukono Kayunga Wakiso

Table A2: Regional workshop schedule

Day	Participants	Relationship as per RISE framework
Monday	District Authorities (DEOs, District Inspectors, Center Coordinating Tutors and District Service Commission	Principals – Management relationship
Tuesday	School leaders (Private and government school headteachers, private school directors, School Management Committee representative, Directors of Studies)	Agents – Management relationship
Wednesday	School leaders (Private and government school headteachers, private school directors, School Management Committee representative, Directors of Studies)	Agents – Voice & Choice relationship
Thursday	Teachers (Private, government, Lower primary, Upper primary, Rural and urban mix)	Agents – Management relationship
Friday	Teachers (Private, government, Lower primary, Upper primary, Rural and urban mix)	Agents – Voice & Choice relationship
Saturday	Parents, Community Opinion leaders, religious leaders, PTA representatives	Principals – Voice & Choice relationship

6

Example materials from the final report phase

Final report by the **JPC- VERSO** team from their diagnostic pilot in **Balochistan, Pakistan**



Final Report

**Application of RISE Education Diagnostics
on
School Education in Balochistan, Pakistan
*(A Case Study of Establishment of New Schools 2013-18)***

by

Verso Consulting
&
Juniper Policy Consulting

Date: 21/11/2022

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1. Background

Pakistan is a federation with a multi-tiered governance structure. The country's federal structure underwent a major change in 2010 when political, administrative and fiscal authority and responsibility over nearly all social subjects were devolved to the provinces through the 18th Amendment to the Constitution. Notable subjects of devolution in the social sector were health and school education. From policy development, planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring to curriculum and standards, all key functions across the school education delivery chain came under the purview of the provinces. Previously, education delivery was managed at the provincial level but jurisdiction over education policy, planning and curriculum lay with the Federal Government. The adoption of the 18th Constitutional Amendment was also accompanied by fiscal reforms and decentralization. The 7th National Finance Commission (NFC) Award not only increased the overall share of provinces in total fiscal resources but also adopted a more equitable formula for the horizontal distribution of resources and devolved an important tax—General Sales Tax on Services—to the provinces. The 18th Amendment accorded constitutional protection to the enhanced fiscal space made available to the provinces by the 7th NFC Award. Furthermore, the 18th Amendment also enhanced the responsibility of the provinces through the insertion of Article 25A in the Constitution, which made the provision of free and compulsory elementary education to all children, aged 5 to 16, a mandatory obligation of the State.

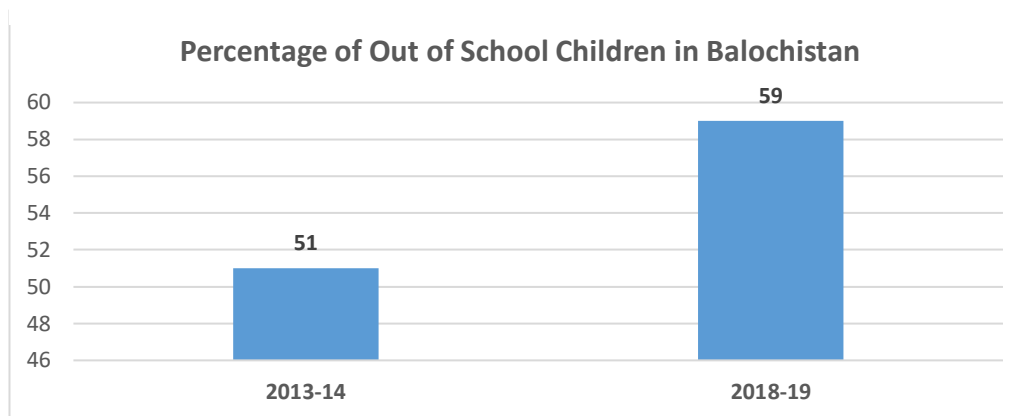
In the wake of the administrative and fiscal decentralization introduced by the 18th Constitutional Amendment, school education has witnessed increased prioritization across provinces, which is indicated, among others, by increased financial allocations and the introduction of reforms in the management and legal framework of education (Naviwala, 2016). However, these measures have not translated into significant improvements in education outcomes.

2. Statement of the Problem

In the wake of the adoption of the 18th Constitutional Amendment and the associated fiscal decentralization, provincial governments have introduced several reforms in the education sector. The Government of the Balochistan (GoB) province, which is Pakistan's poorest, most fragile and smallest in terms of population, and the largest geographically, also introduced reforms to improve the strategic planning, operational management and monitoring of school education. Notable reforms included the development and adoption of five-year sectoral plans, delegation of key management and procurement functions to district and sub-district tiers, implementation of a test-based teacher recruitment regime, the introduction of a new data-based monitoring regime, introduction of mother languages as compulsory subjects and functionalization of parents-teacher committees at school level (R Kakar & Salman N, 2018). Furthermore, the GoB also allocated greater financial resources to school education with the budget allocated to the sector registering a nominal increase of nearly four times by increasing from nearly PKR 20 Billion in 2010 to PKR 80 Billion in 2020 (Zubair M, 2013). Similarly, approximately 3,000 new public schools have been built since 2010, amounting to a 25% increase in the number of schools (Syed A Shah, 2014). One of the most important stated goals of these measures was to increase enrolment by addressing issues related to access to schooling (BESP, 2013).

Increased public spending on education, construction of new public schools and introduction of major reforms in the management of school education, however, did not produce the desired outcomes in Balochistan. The Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM) indicates that the percentage of out-of-school children increased between 2013 and 2018. Similarly, learning outcomes have continued to remain low as more than 50 percent of children in grade 5 have not developed basic literacy and numeracy skills expected by the curriculum in grade 1 (ASER, 2019).

Figure 1: Out of School Children in Balochistan



Source: PSLM Surveys 2013-14 and 2018-19

The stagnancy and deterioration of basic access–related indicators has surprised policy-makers and raised many serious questions. How is it that increase in number of public schools and reforms in education management and monitoring are not translating into a significant reduction in proportion of out-of-school children let alone improvement in learning outcomes?

One reason why even well-intended reform efforts by concerned stakeholders are not producing desired outcomes is that most often these efforts seek to treat symptoms, rather than systemic drivers, of the various ailments of education. In the rare instances where reform champions identify the systemic cause of an ailment, their prescribed approach often seeks to address that individual problem and fails to take into account the wider system and its various constituent elements within which individual problems are uniquely situated. Therefore, an accurate diagnosis of the systemic constraints affecting education system and its various elements acquires high importance as a first step in any efforts to improve and transform education delivery.

It is against the afore-mentioned background that this study applied the RISE diagnostic tool to understand how and why recent reform efforts and increased budgeting have not translated into significant improvements in enrolments and learning outcomes. The pilot tool was applied to examine and analyze the gap between expected and actual impact and their causes for the following initiatives:

- Establishment of new public schools between 2013-18
- Introduction of test-based teacher recruitment policy, Real Time School Monitoring system, Parent Teacher School Management Committees, and other reforms

3. Methodology

After signing of the contract agreement, a 6-member research team was formed to carry out the RISE pilot diagnostic exercise. The diagnostic team comprised of professionals who had prior knowledge of the education landscape in the province and were familiar with the reform initiatives implemented over the past decade. At the inception stage, the diagnostic team identified key literature to be reviewed during the study. It also mapped key stakeholders in the province to be consulted through KIIs, FGDs, and workshops. At the end of the inception phase, the first meeting of the Steering Committee was held and members were apprised about the RISE diagnostic tool and its application in the context of Balochistan. Data was collected through the following methods:

- **Desk Research:** The diagnostic team reviewed and analyzed all available literature related to establishment of new schools in Balochistan between 2013 and 2018. This included research reports, education sector plans, budget sheets, executive notifications, policy documents and legislative acts of the Government of Balochistan.
- **Internal Simulation Exercise:** After extensive review and analysis of available literature, the diagnostic team started an internal simulation exercise to fill the excel sheet template for all relationships. The team also developed a framework for analyzing the politics relationship, keeping in view the observation that politics had a major impact on all other relationships. In total, the team held more than 15 internal simulation sessions with each session which lasting for two-three hours. The various elements and sub-elements of all four relationships were filled as per the team members' understanding with reasoning and justification for a particular description. The internal simulation exercise not only helped the team understand and fill the RISE template but also facilitated the identification of missing information.
- **Primary Data Collection (KIIs, FGDs and Stakeholders' Workshop):** After completing the internal simulation exercise, the team collected primary data through Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions and Stakeholders' Workshop. A total of 07 KIIs, 03 FGDs and 01 Stakeholder workshop were conducted. Nearly 35 people participated in the FGDs and Stakeholders Workshop. Details are provided in *Annex-I*.
 - *First Round of Key Informant Interviews:* First, it conducted KIIs with politicians and bureaucracy in the provincial capital of Quetta to find answers for the missing information related to key actors and processes at the provincial level. List of KIIs is attached as *Annex-II*.
 - *Stakeholders' Workshop at the Provincial Level:* After the initial round of KIIs, stakeholders' workshop was organized in provincial capital. A small and select group of participants, mostly senior bureaucrats involved in education delivery, was invited to the workshop. Politicians were purposefully not invited to give safe space to senior bureaucrats in the workshop. Participants of the workshop were first briefed about the RISE Tool and then invited to respond to questions related to sub-elements in the compact, management, and voice & choice relationships. List of workshop participants is attached herewith as *Annex-III*.
 - *Focus Group Discussions at the Local Level:* The team then conducted field work at the district level (District Killa Abdullah) to understand how the four relationships played out local level. The following three FGDs were held at the district level:
 - FGD with head & teachers of a functional girls public high school
 - FGD with head & teachers of a charity school (middle school)
 - FGD with community representatives of a semi-functional public school

- *Second Round of Key Informant Interviews:* Follow up KIIs were conducted in the wake of the initial round of interviews and stakeholder workshops to further investigate difference between de jure and de facto practices.
- **Data Triangulation and Final Analysis of Alignments & Incoherence:** After completion of data gathering, the data was transcribed and analyzed. The core team then started another round of simulation exercise in which it finalized element, sub-elements for each relationship. Some of the descriptions in the RISE template were filled and others were revised in the light of the findings of the primary data. The team proceeded to complete the incoherence sheets and completed final analysis of the major incoherences.
- The findings were then presented to members of the Steering Committee.
- A table of stakeholders as per the Principal-Agent framework for all relationships in the RISE framework is attached as *Annex-IV*.

4. Analysis of Key Relationships of the RISE Framework

1.4.1 Politics Relationship

The State-citizen relationship is largely broken and resembles a closed-order system dominated by authoritarianism and clientelism.

DELEGATION: Common citizens have poor understanding of "learning or quality education" even as a majority are concerned about the education of their children. However, there is difference between what citizens desire as individuals and what they demand as a top priority in the process of political agenda setting and interest aggregation. Citizens are poorly organized. Key barriers to organization for collective action include poverty, prevalence of tribalism, armed conflict, and controlled democracy. Prevalence of chronic poverty has had disempowering impact on citizens' ability to organise and make political demands. This situation has been exacerbated by urban migration and forced displacement induced by drought and violent conflict. The relationship between majority of citizens and elected representatives is mediated and managed by intermediaries, notably tribal leaders, religious leaders and new mercantile class, who are often interested more in extracting personal gains (such as construction contract, transfer posting, jobs) from politicians rather than striving for collective goods and services.

In theory, the political system provides formal avenues for aggregation of citizen preferences as well as citizen feedback. Right to vote, right to freedom of expression, right to participate in political activities and right to protest are constitutionally guaranteed but these have been undermined to a great extent by the prevalence of controlled democracy or de-facto authoritarian political system. Credibility of general elections and legitimacy of representatives is widely questioned though the 2013-18 regime was considered relatively more legitimate.

Civil society is tiny. Mainstream media has limited presence in the province and often faces censorship and curbs. Local media is small and with similar limitations the mainstream one. Use of social media platforms to make political demands is on the rise among the younger generation. Technology appears to have had an empowering impact on the voice of younger citizens. However, the effectiveness of social media platforms to induce sustained and meaningful political change remains limited.

While the level of political awareness is generally high, actual participation in formal political processes is limited. Voter turn-out is low but public participation in protests and social movements is high. Most people seem to have lost faith in the existing institutional mechanisms of political participation. Many have withdrawn from the ""system"" or resorted to extra-institutional avenues to express political preferences. Social movements led by younger people are on the rise.

At the macro-provincial level, issues around right to life and conflict have dominated public discourse. Public concerns about unlawful use of force and human rights abuses have dominated the public discourse and pushed issues of service delivery to the backseat, especially so in conflict-affected areas. "Crowding out" impact of conflict on service delivery issues can be observed to the extent of "politics" relationship. Consequently, organized public demand for better and learning-focused education delivery is negligible.

INFORMATION: Limited systemic information is available to measure and assess the performance of elected members of assembly and/or cabinet members. Other than some information about contribution and performance of members in the legislative assembly, there is opacity of information about performance of cabinet and ministers. Government occasionally issues advertisements in newspapers to project their performance but this is often related to construction of physical infrastructure and provision of jobs. Elected representatives have lately also begun to use social media to project their performance. However, overall, the information shared is limited, irregular, unreliable and user-unfriendly.

In absence of systemic data and information, judgements about performance of members of assembly, the Chief Minister and cabinet members are based almost entirely on personal subjective experiences and knowledge of people. People assess performance of representatives based on their perception of tangible inputs they have provided, physical infrastructure and jobs. Outcomes-focused performance assessment is non-existent. Additionally, intangible non-economic and social factors such as inter-personal skills, communication skills, public accessibility, participation in social occasions as marriages or funerals, also play a critical role in shaping citizens' judgement about performance of elected representatives.

TAXATION SYSTEM AND CITIZENS' WILLINGNESS TO PAY: Fiscal transfers from the federal government are major sources of public financing. Provincial revenues make a tiny proportion of overall budget. Taxation system is highly centralized and comprises mostly of indirect taxes. Tax collection is not linked or earmarked to a particular sector. Citizens have no or little oversight in taxation policy and budget formulation and execution.

Citizens are generally reluctant to pay taxes. They do not trust the State to provide quality education (or any other services) in return for taxation. Major chunk of taxes are deducted at source, mostly, from salaried people who have little choice in it.

MOTIVATION: There are strong entry barriers into politics. Dominance of political affiliation along tribal lines, lack of intra-party democracy and high financial cost of running elections

and the consequent influence of big money are among the major barriers to entry into politics. Strong cultural barriers exist in case of women.

Although people are skeptical of politics in general, politicians enjoy great de-facto power and social status. Abundance of rent-seeking and corruption opportunities makes politics a very attractive profession. Given limited presence of the private sector, public money is the main source of capital accumulation.

The state of capitalist development is primitive in Balochistan. It is an under-developed and pre-industrial society, meaning there is little pressure from labour market for prioritising education. There is little political competition around education delivery and improvement in learning. The 2013-2015 period was marginally different in qualitative sense given that both the Chief Minister and Education Minister were from middle class background and belonged to political parties whose core support based comprised educated middle class.

1.4.2 Compact Relationship

Within the compact relationship, the stated goals, policy and financial allocations are aligned around access whereas the actual practice and public expenditures are aligned around patronage. Delegation has dominant alignment with access, Finance has partial alignment each with patronage and access, and information has alignment with patronage.

DELEGATION: The Executive has a stated (and legally binding) objective of universal enrolment and completion for age cohort of 5 to 16. The five-year Education Sector Plans of 2013 and 2018 have targets to reduce the gender gap in school availability at all levels and increase enrolments across all districts. Success for both the political executive and bureaucracy means increase in the number of schools and reduction in missing facilities.

Notwithstanding the stated goals of universal enrolment, there is a wide gap between the stated and actual policy on establishment of new schools. Politically motivated factors override technical rationale. For politicians, schools are built as interventions for strengthening patronage networks and rewarding targeted groups within their respective electoral constituencies. The ruling regime from 2013 to 2015 was an exception to the extent that, compared to the preceding and following periods, there was a stronger desire for achieving access-related goals on the part of the principal.

Similarly, the main stated goal of the executive for human resource is to ensure the provision and availability of enough qualified teachers. Teacher salaries remain high, and rising. Hiring of teachers was traditionally influenced by politicians. However, the introduction of examination-based teacher recruitment in 2013-14 weakened the patronage factor. After the change of Chief Minister in 2015, the pressure to use HR as an instrument of patronage returned and rose but with the examination-based recruitment still in place, the degree of patronage in teacher hiring has weakened significantly compared to the pre-2013 period. The weakening of potential for patronage has led to a lowered motivation of the principal to recruit more teachers. The outcome is that teacher recruitment has slowed down, even as new schools have been constructed, and shortage of

teachers has emerged as one of the primary reasons for large number of new schools remaining idle or non-functional for years.

FINANCE: The education budget has development and current components.

The development budget constitutes 15 to 20% of the total education budget and is, theoretically, used for one time expenditures. The process of allocation and spending of funds from development component of the budget was driven mainly by patronage considerations even as the ostensible goal for construction of new schools was the expansion of schooling opportunities. Members of provincial assembly identified the location and site of new schools without any formal need assessment. The result was that many new schools were built in areas where they were not needed the most.

The current budget consists of operational expenses, almost 90% of which is taken up by the salary bill. The remaining 10% is used for operational uses like payment of utilities etc. Textbooks are also purchased every year through the current budget for which a separate allocation is ensured. In addition to government, development partners also finance a number of inputs and processes, including equipment, trainings and data-based monitoring systems.

In comparison to the development component of the education budget, the current component remains comparatively less vulnerable to discretion and is shaped by pre-determined operational needs where political or managerial discretion cannot play a major role. As explained earlier, the salary bill makes up major chunk of the current budget. With rule-based recruitment in place for teachers, the political incentive to recruit, and consequentially impact the current budget, is low.

The differential/varying degree of discretion over finances for various inputs of school has resulted in a situation where financing for school infrastructure was made available much quickly compared to the inputs whose financing was relatively less pliable to maneuvering and influence. The outcome was that physical buildings of schools got built rather quickly but slow process of teacher hiring meant that a large percentage of these newly constructed schools remained idle and non-functional.

INFORMATION: The education system does not measure quality or learning outcomes on a regular basis for primary and middle levels and even when such data is generated it remains unutilized¹. For practical use, a thin, inputs-centric data collection regime is in place, which is focused mainly on availability of basic facilities in schools and teacher attendance. This data is provided to the top and is rarely used except in allocations of the recurrent, non-salary budgets to schools. Data is also available on results of high-stake examinations but it is, similar to data produced for primary and middle levels, not utilized for measurement of quality and hence not a part of the systemic accountability structures.

¹ Balochistan Assessment and Examination Center (BAEC) was set up to undertake systemic assessments for use of policy planners and implementers. Practically, the data is neither used by community (voice and choice) nor any of the other stakeholders (bureaucracy or political levels)

For construction of new schools, a weak monitoring of the construction process was in place, which measured progress against planned timelines and financial and physical targets including quality of construction by the Communications and Works Department. However, no systemic follow-up mechanism existed for making the school operational once construction work was completed.

In general, the demand for information by the principal is low and selective, driven by needs of patronage. Even the accountability around thin inputs such as teacher attendance, missing facilities is weak despite availability of decent data. There is little appetite both on the part of principal and agent to use available information to make assessment or judgement about education quality.

1.4.3 Management Relationship

Majority of the elements within the management relationship are aligned around process compliance except information which is aligned for patronage. The delegation and finance have strong alignment for process compliance whereas support and motivation have alignment for both process compliance and access. Information is the weakest link of management relationship as a limited input-centric information is gathered but even this is not used in a systemic manner for accountability or improving performance of the education system.

DELEGATION: Process compliance is the dominant alignment with weak alignment around selection and patronage as well.

Rule compliance is the highest priority of the Principal. Ensuring availability of thin inputs and compliance with procedures is the main priority: allocation and release of finances, and provision of building, textbooks, instruction material, and teachers. Centrally developed curricula and textbooks are covered for teaching in the classroom with no measurement of student learning or systemic reviews based on learning. High stakes examinations are aligned for selection as by default children with better household conditions perform adequately in these examinations to progress to higher education. The rest are dropped out of the system or at best progress to poor quality higher education with low value for future employment and income generation. The focus on high grades in upper secondary and high school exams indicate a weak alignment with selection as well.

The relationship between education authorities and schools is strictly hierarchical. There is some space for interest groups to influence the system through the Principal, especially, in cases of transfer postings of teachers and education managers. Beyond the Principal, the system is aligned largely for compliance due to hierarchical structures and existence of rules-based system governing HR appointments and public finance expenditures. Innovation is usually seen as too risky unless it is championed by the Chief Minister and the Minister Education.

INFORMATION: The information regime on performance of agents is aligned around patronage whereas exams are aligned with selection for progression.

The most important components of the EMIS system are data on enrolment and thin inputs such as student attendance, teacher attendance, availability and condition of building and other facilities and status of school (functional vs non-functional). Learning outcomes are not measured. High-stake exams (matriculation and intermediate) are prioritized as they are critical for progress into higher education. However, the results of these exams are not utilized for feedback into the system. Examinations are poorly aligned with the curriculum and often test only memory and not conceptual and procedural mastery. Cheating is common in high-stake exams. Both supply-side shortfalls, such as flawed learning design and non-availability of teachers, and demand-side factors such as the focus of parents to ensure higher grades for children in high-stake exams, have created an enabling environment for cheating. Interest groups are often able to influence the system both via Principal and Agent to facilitate cheating.

The information gathered is limited accounting. No Information is collected on school leadership or teachers' performance in the classroom. The newly-introduced Real Time School Monitoring system has improved monitoring of thin inputs. However, even this limited information is not used in a systemic and regular manner for accountability of teachers or schools. There is no demand or willingness at the top to use available information in decision making, let alone improve the quality of information gathered. Information on teacher attendance is used to penalize chronic absentees only occasionally.

FINANCE: Finance is aligned for process compliance.

The financing of education inputs is focused mainly on compliance and has no relationship with outcomes on learning and even attainment. While the budgetary allocation and release process is highly centralized, the degree of discretion varies significantly across the two main components of budget i.e. current and development budget. The allocation and spending of recurring budget is governed largely by rules and therefore offers little room for discretion. There exists some corruption but not to the degree of a patronage-based system. Typically, the teacher (salary) and non-teacher (non-salary) allocations are made based on historical trend. There is no assessment of actual need or viability of the past expenditures. Little experimentation has been undertaken in spending under the recurrent component of the budget. Within the recurring budget, a tiny percentage of budget related to procurement of basic school material is decentralized at the cluster level (high-school level entity)².

In contrast, the development budget is allocated and spent in a highly discretionary manner. No effort is made to provide account or accounting for spending. However, this discretion is exercised largely by the political tier including Ministers and Members of the Assembly, not by the Principal of the Management relationship. The bureaucracy largely complies with directions from the political tier. The process of allocation of development funds has a very weak link with actual development needs of school education.

² A cluster consists of a set of primary and middle schools around a high school selected as the center for the cluster.

MOTIVATION: It is aligned for both access and process compliance.

Teaching is a relatively low-status profession within society as well as within the overall civil service system, especially for males. Lesser control over exercise of administrative authority and availability of fewer opportunities for rent-seeking are major reasons why teaching remains less desired than other administrative positions. The professional and social norms related to teaching are also weak and discouraging. The system doesn't recognize or differentiate between good-performing and bad-performing teachers. The monitoring regime focuses primarily on absenteeism. After certain years of experience, teachers can be posted to administrative positions within the department. These positions like the district education officer carry more power and prestige than a teaching positions.

Teaching career, beyond entry, is not linked to learning or a teacher's performance in classroom learning. None of the variables (exit, placement, responsibilities, appraisal, promotion, recognition and autonomy) are linked to the ability to teach in the classroom. These are either linked to seniority or provided (on the odd occasion) for non-teaching work. Teacher career structures are neither based on EMIS thin indicators nor on results of high stakes examinations or completion of curriculum. Seniority is the only criterion for promotion.

SUPPORT: The support system that front-line service providers receive is aligned for both access and process compliance.

Instruction material is not connected to realities of the classroom: learner endowments, needs, teacher capacity and multi-grade situations. Teachers' guides are not prepared in routine and where and when available are not used in the classroom due to the pressure of covering syllabi. Formative assessments are conducted but teachers are not provided any specialized training for quality assessment. These are used as tests for the learner but not as a feedback into the teaching-learning process.

Teacher training is random, sporadic and driven by short time horizons. It is not based on systemic needs analysis and therefore fails to address major teaching-learning issues in the classroom. It is incoherent with both instruction material and other parts of the system, in particular the curriculum, exams, and the need to tailor instruction to students' learning levels. No teacher training is provided, in routine, on instructional material even where curricula and textbooks are changed.

Peer monitoring and support is voluntary in some pockets but not part of the education system. A position of learning coordinator exists for mentoring purposes, especially, for primary schools. Practically, the learning coordinators is neither trained for the function nor performs it. Horizontal professional networks for monitoring and support do not exist.

In-service training is often funded by development partners. In these interventions, needs assessments for in-service training are aligned to goals and objectives of a particular project and not a systemic process of exploring and defining training priorities. There is no school or classroom level discretion over instructional material. Teacher guides are not a regular feature.

Pre-service qualifications are standardized and largely enforced. However, standards or quality of delivery vary across pre-service training providers as the accreditation regime is weakly implemented. In most cases the quality is poor and focused heavily on theory. The trainings are essentially lecture based with little or no element of practice and application. Professional accountability does not exist.

1.4.4 Voice & Choice Relationship

DELEGATION: It is aligned for selection as well as patronage.

Voice prioritizes education, indicated, among the others, by large out of pocket expenses by parents on education of children. Families prioritize test scores (especially in high stake examinations) and learning of English language, which is perceived to be critical for upward social mobility and future career prospects. Cheating is common and is largely condoned and even facilitated by parents.

However, voice is too weak and poorly-organized, thanks to lack of internal community cohesion around education as well strong perception of poor quality of education in public schools among parents. Voice has been abandoned in favour of choice. Elites and middle class have opted out of public schools and shifted to urban centers to educate their children in private schools. The urban migration has further weakened voice in villages. Similarly, voice in urban based government schools has been weakened by shifting of children from even the mildly affluent families to private schools. Collective action organizations (both formal and informal) are dysfunctional. Prevalence of hierarchical tribal structure has facilitated clientelism and discouraged issue-based community mobilization.

In the rare cases where voice exists, it is focused on thin inputs and process compliance. The rare islands of success in terms of presence of strong voice are distinguished by quality of community leadership (highly motivated community leader or non-traditional leader leading community).

The government has created institutional mechanisms for engaging parents in school management such as PTMSCs, Local Education Council and Local Education Purchase Committees but these remain mostly non-functional. Little meaningful effort has been made to make them functional except during the 2013-2015 when a pro-education Chief Minister was holding office.

INFORMATION: It is aligned for selection.

Results of secondary school leaving exam and higher secondary school leaving exam are the most important information available to parents. Little information is available on learning before secondary school. Examinations do not measure learning levels. Instead, they encourage rote learning and yet are conduits to admissions in top-ranked medical, engineering and other technical universities is highly sought-after by parents. Cheating is

quite common and condoned by social norms, partially propelled by the high stakes of these examinations.

How much students are learning is opaque to parents throughout most of schooling. At the primary level, majority of parents themselves have limited interest and lack the foundational literacy and numeracy skills to observe learning level of their children. At the Middle and High School level, the social composition of parents as a group changes as a result of a filtration process caused by dropouts. Parents as a group at the middle and high school level are a relatively more educated and well-off group, and have greater level of interest in the education of children. In addition to scores in bi-annual and annual exams, parents often rely on other proxy measures to understand the quality of their child's education, notably improvement in ability to speak and read English or Urdu language (often parents make children read local newspaper headlines/stories).

FINANCE: It is aligned for both patronage and selection.

Local community or the school tier has little discretion over financing for education. Decisions related to public financing for schools are taken at the provincial level with little input or oversight of the local community. The minor exception is the case of procurement of basic equipment for schools where representatives of local community have officially been given a role in oversight of the procurement process through local purchase committees but most of these committees are non-functional or dysfunctional.

Private spending on education is almost always individual investment in private schooling and tutoring. There is no private financing for public schools. In contrast, most madressahs are financed by private individuals through charity or Zakat.

Although public financing is not strongly linked with information on learning, test scores or inputs, parents' decision to choose schools is based mostly on test scores at high and higher secondary level as comparable data on test scores is available. The information available to parents is about scores and pass/fail percentages of schools in high-stake exams (upper secondary and high school leaving exams). At the primary and middle level, parents often rely on other signaling instruments to choose schools. These include reputation of head teacher and teacher in case of public schools, socio-economic status of students or school in case of private schools and peer recommendations in both cases. Post-middle, exam scores and probability of getting admission in desired universities are used to justify decisions related to choice of schools.

MOTIVATION: Patronage is the dominant alignment whereas selection is the weak alignment.

Voice has little role in overseeing teacher career. Voice receives little comparable information about schools at the primary and middle level. Whatever information is received about individual schools (teacher attendance, student enrolment, water availability etc) at the local level, voice is not empowered enough to act on the information. In the very rare cases where voice is represented by an "enlightened and benevolent" community leader or head, voice monitors and acts on information about school inputs. In

most cases, tribal hierarchy and social norms of in-group solidarity and credible threat of social sanctions discourage emerging voices to act on the information available about school inputs, resulting in a highly weak social accountability.

Parents' decisions to choose schools is often based on test scores of students of these schools in high-stake examinations.

5. Major Incoherences

The overall education system is aligned strongly for patronage although there is weak alignment around access as well. There is no major incoherence across the four relationships as three out of four are aligned around patronage whereas one (i.e. management) is aligned for process compliance. However, even the process compliance is compatible with patronage although it does restrict the discretion of the Principal in certain areas, especially with regards to current expenditures.

Major incoherences are within relationships as there is often a gap between de-jure and de-facto practices. Stated policy goals often differ from, and at times contradict, actual motivation and intent. Delegation is not backed up by meaningful finances, performance management regime (information) and non-monetary support mechanisms. Major incoherence are as follows:

INCOHERENCES IN COMPACT

Delegation & finance: Improving access and learning are the stated goals. De-jure actions are taken for improving access. Adequate financial allocations are made for access related goals.

However, the adequate financing is spent in an inefficient manner. School buildings are built on political basis and availability of HR is not ensured. This indicates an incoherence between what delegation and the financial allocation intend to achieve and what the actual spending ends up achieving.

Delegation & information: Decent information is available about thin inputs and exam results. However, the Principal is least interested in using the available information, let alone improving the data regime to measure performance and learning outcomes. This implies that the Principal does not have a genuine commitment to access. Access is an instrument to further patronage-related goals.

MAJOR INCOHERENCES IN MANAGEMENT

Delegation & information: Expansion of schooling is the stated goal. The information regime is aligned around selection as well as access. Decent information is available about thin inputs and high stake examination results. However, the Principal does not utilise the available information to make decisions. This implies that the Principal is not keen to act on available information to ensure increased enrolment (or improve learning) through provision of thin inputs in school. The Principal also appears to have little interest in ensuring availability of teachers.

Finance and motivation: Although teachers are paid relatively well to attract good talent, the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations around teaching remain weak (especially from the

perspective of male teachers). The latter implies that increasing teacher salaries alone might neither attract top-quality resource nor improve existing teachers' willingness and ability to teach if the social norms and organizational culture in schools and career advancement structure of teachers remain uncondusive.

	Politics	Compact	Management	Voice & Choice
Delegation: what the principal wants the agent to do.	Patronage (dominant alignment) & access (weak)	Access	Process compliance (dominant) Selection & patronage (weak alignment)	Patronage & Selection
Finance: resources the principal allocates to the agent to achieve tasks.	Patronage	Access & Patronage	Process compliance	Patronage & selection
Information: how the principal asses the agent's performance	Patronage/ Closed Order System	Patronage	Patronage as well as selection	Selection
Motivation: How the principal motivates the agent.	Closed Order System		Access	Patronage (dominant alignment) & selection (weak)
Support: preparation and assistance that the principal provides to the agent to complete the task.			Access as well as process compliance	

6. Recommendations for Policy-makers

- Both the research team and members of Steering Committee recommended the prioritization of redressal of incoherence within the Compact relationship. The most important redressal is to ensure that the public expenditures on new schools are need based and contribute to expansion of schooling opportunities. This would require a comprehensive mapping and assessment of communities and population settlements that need new schools. Once need assessment is completed, development budget meant for expansion of schooling opportunities may be earmarked and spent in these areas.
- Secondly, it was also highlighted that the issue of slow hiring of teachers, which has resulted in many new schools remaining idle or non-functional for years, needs to be addressed on a priority basis. One way to overcome this problem is to abandon the current piecemeal approach in favour of a more integrated approach to establishment of new schools. Approval of teaching and non-teaching staff of a school may be made mandatory part of the process of approval of PC-I for construction of physical building of new school.

- Thirdly, it was agreed that effective utilization of available information on test scores and thin inputs is also likely to lead to significant improvement in expansion of schooling opportunities. The Principal needs to make more demand and use of existing data. This will be a low-hanging fruit until the data regime is revised to include assessment of learning outcomes.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEX-I: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN STAKEHOLDERS' WORKSHOP AND FGDS

S.No	Type of Stakeholder Consultation	Relationships Studied	No of Participants
1.	Stakeholder Workshop (Provincial)	Compact & Management Relationship	08
2.	FGD with Head Teacher and Teachers of High School	Management and Voice and Choice	05
3.	FGD with Head Teacher and Teachers of Charity School (Primary)	Management and Voice and Choice	05
4.	FGD with community representatives	Management and Voice and Choice	10

ANNEX-II: LIST OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIs)

S.No	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Malik Baloch	Chief Minister Balochistan 2013-15
2.	Rahim Ziaratwal	Minister School Education
3.	Noou-ul-haq Baloch	Secretary Secondary Education 2017-18
4.	Asfandyar Kakar	Additional Secretary 2015 Project Director, GPE 2015-16
5.	Naseeb Ullah	Owner/manager of private school
6.	Molvi Abdul Bari	Owner/manager of madressah
7.	Bismillah Khan Kakar	Head of local community

ANNEX-III: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS OF STAKEHOLDERS' WORKSHOP

1. Abdul Saboor Kakar Chairman CMIT, Ex-Secretary Secondary Education
2. Rashid Razzaq Coordinator Governance & Policy Project, Former Add Sec Education
3. Nizam-ud-din CEO Balochistan Assessment and Examination Commission
4. Samina Saleem District Education Officer, Quetta
5. Irfan Awan Education Expert and Civil Society representative
6. Abdus Sami Khan Team Lead (RISE Project)
7. Dr. Barkat Shah Team Member (RISE Project)
8. Dr. Muhammad Saleem Team Member (RISE Project)

ANNEX-III: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS

	Principals	Agents
Politics	Representative of local community engaged in school education; Representatives of political parties ³ ; Civil society organizations; Journalists ⁴ ; Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) ⁵ ;	Members of Provincial Assembly; Cabinet; Chief Minister; Minister of Education; Minister of Finance; Minister of Planning and Development; Minister of Communication and Works;
Compact	Members of Provincial Assembly; Cabinet; Chief Minister;	Minister of Secondary Education; Department of Secondary Education; Planning & Development Department; Department of Finance; Communication & Works Department;
Management	Department of Secondary Education ⁶	Policy Planning & Implementation Unit (PPIU); Performance Management Cell (PMC); Directorate of Schools (DoS); Bureau of Curriculum (BoC); Provincial Institute for Teacher Education (PITE); Balochistan Textbook Board; Balochistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Examinations (BBISE), Balochistan Assessment & Examination Commission (BAEC), Balochistan Education Foundation (BEF), Balochistan Education Endowment Fund (BEEF);

³ Political parties may possibly act as both Principals and Agents in the Politics relationship. If a political party has representation in the parliament and/or is part of the government, then it is acting as “Agent”. However, if a political party is neither in parliament nor part of the government, then it may serve as an agent as it represents and aggregates the interests of citizens (principals).

⁴ Journalists articulate the interests of citizens (principals) and also monitor the performance of agents.

⁵ ASER is a private organization that produces and publishes annual reports on learning outcomes. The findings of these reports provide information to citizens on the performance of Agents both in the ‘Politics’ and ‘Compact’ relationship

⁶ The Department of Secondary Education looks after education from Grade 1 to Grade 12. This is the primary organization responsible for implementing the school education agenda and vision on behalf of the Executive tier.

		Donors (UNICEF; World Food Program; World Bank); Private Schools Association; Teachers Union; Wafaq-ul Madaris and other boards of religious seminaries; District Education Officers (DEOs); Heads of High, Middle and Primary Schools; Teachers;
Voice & Choice	Parents Students	Heads of Schools Teachers

6

Example materials from the final report phase

Final report (in Spanish) by the **SUMMA** team from their diagnostic pilot in **Ecuador**



Incoherencias del sistema educativo ecuatoriano:

¿Cómo alinear a sus actores y los esfuerzos públicos hacia el logro de aprendizajes?

Informe de resultados



Laboratorio de Investigación e
Innovación en Educación para
América Latina y el Caribe

Reconocimientos

Equipo de Investigación

La presente investigación fue desarrollada por SUMMA (Laboratorio de Investigación e Innovación en Educación para América Latina y el Caribe). El equipo de investigación estuvo conformado por las siguientes personas:

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Comité Asesor:

- Ministra de Educación de Ecuador (MINEDUC) - Sra. María Brown Pérez.
- Directora Ejecutiva del Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa (INEVAL) - Susana Araujo.
- Subsecretaria de Apoyo, Seguimiento y Regulación de MINEDUC - Doris Guamán.
- Coordinadora Administrativa Financiera de MINEDUC - María Fernanda Sáenz.
- Asesora del Viceministerio MINEDUC - Yolanda Villalba.
- Subsecretario de la Zona 9, Quito - Enrique Pérez.
- Quichua Amazónico experto en Educación Intercultural Bilingüe - Néstor Grefa.
- Directora del Programa Doctoral - Lizbeth Pérez.
- Rectora de la Universidad Nacional de Educación - Rebeca Castellanos.
- Dirigente del Gremio de Docentes Fiscales "Frente 13 de Abril"- Cesar Chiriboga.
- Consultor de Diálogos de la Ciudadanía - Patricio Crespo.
- Director de Educación de Unidos por la Educación - Sergio Carneros.
- Rector Colegio La Salle - Eduardo Ramírez.
- Oficial de Educación del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo - Luana Marotta.
- Coordinadora General de CLADE - Nelsy Lizarazo.

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1. Introducción

En las últimas décadas, Ecuador ha avanzado en transformaciones políticas, sociales y económicas. Esto se manifiesta en su progreso importante en diversos indicadores de bienestar, lo que no contradice la existencia de importantes brechas y desafíos por delante.

Son muchos los factores detrás de este progreso. Entre ellos, sin duda la nueva constitución de 2008 ha significado la promoción de derechos sociales y el reconocimiento de los pueblos indígenas y su cultura, con el fin de hacer de la sociedad ecuatoriana una más inclusiva, equitativa y democrática.

El derecho a la educación ha sido especialmente priorizado dentro de las agendas gubernamentales, y en especial en la constitución de 2008, la que mandata al Estado a destinar 6% del Producto Interno Bruto (PIB), con el fin de ampliar el acceso y mejorar la calidad de los aprendizajes. A su vez, la orgánica del Estado y sus niveles de gestión (nacional, zonal, distrital) han sido reformados con el fin de lograr una mayor desconcentración. Diversos programas para mejorar la carrera docente desde su formación inicial y continua, acompañados de mejores y más transparentes procesos de selección y nombramiento de maestros, así como mejores condiciones salariales, han buscado fortalecer el profesorado y su capacidad pedagógica. También se ha actualizado y flexibilizado el currículum nacional, y consolidado el sistema de evaluación educativa realizada por INEVAL. Por otra

parte, se ha invertido en infraestructura y equipamiento de las escuelas. Finalmente, el reconocimiento de los pueblos indígenas y minorías étnicas y valoración de su cultura ha llevado a promover la educación intercultural bilingüe a lo largo del territorio nacional.

A pesar de estos y otros esfuerzos, y los avances logrados en acceso y cobertura escolar (especialmente en secundaria), la calidad de la educación sigue siendo un desafío urgente y de magnitud, debido a los bajos resultados alcanzados y las profundas brechas sociales que estos denotan.

Ante esta situación, este primer estudio exploratorio se plantea el objetivo de identificar los principales nudos críticos e incoherencias institucionales anidadas en el sistema educativo ecuatoriano, que inhiben y limitan su capacidad para transformar estos esfuerzos, recursos y reformas en mejores aprendizajes para todas y todos los estudiantes de Ecuador. Para ello, utiliza una metodología innovadora, desarrollada por el programa RISE (Research on Improving Systems of Education) de la Universidad de Oxford, basada en una perspectiva de Pensamiento Sistémico. Este enfoque permite analizar los actores, sus incentivos e interacciones, con el fin de verificar si existen incoherencias que impiden alinear el sistema con el objetivo de aprendizaje.

Esta investigación se basa principalmente en metodologías cualitativas e información recabada en terreno a través de entrevistas, grupos focales y también encuestas realizadas en el primer semestre de 2022, en tres ciudades de Ecuador: Quito, Tena y Guayaquil. En total, más de 50 actores de distintas regiones y estamentos del sistema educativo participaron activamente en la identificación y discusión de las inconsistencias y nudos críticos descritos en este estudio.

Se espera que este ejercicio exploratorio sirva de punto de partida para nuevas conversaciones y debates, desde una perspectiva sistémica, que aborden antiguos y persistentes problemas del sistema educativo ecuatoriano. Asimismo, esta investigación diagnóstica permite visualizar una rica agenda de investigación, con foco en las relaciones de los actores del sistema educativo ecuatoriano. Comprender de mejor manera el modo en que dichas relaciones se estructuran, la forma en que ellas han evolucionado históricamente o el peso que dichas relaciones y alineaciones tienen en los resultados y desempeños del sistema educativo parecen ser preguntas relevantes y necesarias de investigación.

El informe cuenta con cinco secciones. Adicionalmente a esta introducción, la segunda parte resume el marco conceptual desarrollado por RISE. La tercera sección detalla la metodología utilizada. La cuarta sección presenta una breve descripción del sistema ecuatoriano, pensada especialmente para los lectores e investigadores de otras latitudes. La quinta parte describe las principales alineaciones del sistema ecuatoriano y expone las inconsistencias del mismo, en cuanto a las relaciones entre actores, influidas por mandatos, recursos e incentivos. Por último, se sintetizan las principales recomendaciones que se desprenden del análisis realizado y de las recomendaciones del Comité Asesor.



2. Marco Conceptual

El Marco de Pensamiento Sistémico para analizar sistemas educativos elaborado por el Programa RISE (Research on Improving Systems of Education)¹, impulsado por la Universidad de Oxford y Oxford Policy Management, busca identificar la falta de alineamiento e incoherencias en las relaciones e incentivos de los actores que componen el sistema educativo, y entender cómo dichas incoherencias obstaculizan la mejora educativa. Esto permite guiar y priorizar las reformas al sistema educativo.

El modelo RISE analiza las relaciones entre los actores que conforman el sistema desde el paradigma del principal-agente, esto es, evaluando relaciones “de responsabilidad” entre un actor, denominado el “principal”, que delega el logro de ciertos objetivos a otro actor, denominado el “agente”. De acuerdo con Silberstein y Spivack (2022: 7): “*la relación principal-agente es un modelo utilizado para describir una situación en la que un actor (el principal) quiere que se realice una tarea, por lo que delega a otro actor (el agente) para que éste la lleve a cabo. El principal establece lo que se espera del agente y cómo se recompensará al agente por completar la(s) tarea(s) que el principal establece, es decir, cómo el principal hará responsable al agente. [Así] el principal equipa al agente para que realice las tareas, supervisando e incentivando su rendimiento*”.

1 <https://riseprogramme.org/tools/rise-system-diagnostic>

El problema de Principal-Agente, ampliamente estudiado en la disciplina económica (e.g. Laffont y Martimont, 2002), surge del hecho de que el principal no tiene información completa ni mecanismos de control adecuados para monitorear el esfuerzo realizado por el agente para lograr los objetivos que se le han encargado. Además, el logro de los objetivos no solo depende del esfuerzo del agente, sino también de otras variables contextuales inobservables y que suelen estar fuera del control, tanto del agente como del principal. Por ello, cuando los logros alcanzados por el agente son menores a los inicialmente acordados con el principal, surge la duda de si la causa del peor desempeño se encuentra en el esfuerzo insuficiente del agente o en las variables contextuales no controladas por éste. A su vez, también puede surgir la pregunta de si el apoyo y recursos entregados por el principal al agente son adecuados y suficientes para cumplir con la tarea. Con todo, teniendo en cuenta sus limitaciones, el valor agregado de este enfoque es poner su atención en las relaciones de coherencia entre: las directrices que entrega el principal y que recibe el agente; los incentivos que posee el agente para esforzarse y llevar a cabo la tarea encomendada; los apoyos entregados por el principal al agente para lograr los objetivos; y la información utilizada por el principal para evaluar adecuada e íntegramente los resultados obtenidos por el agente.

Llevando estos conceptos al contexto escolar, podemos pensar que el ministerio de educación (actuando como principal), delega a las escuelas (agente) que los niños, niñas y adolescentes alcancen ciertos logros educativos. En caso de que estos no sean alcanzados bajo este modelo, es difícil para el ministerio saber con exactitud qué proporción de menor desempeño se debe, por ejemplo, a la falta de esfuerzo de las escuelas y cuánto a las condiciones de vulnerabilidad socioeconómica de la comunidad escolar en que se imparte educación. A su vez, el ministerio tampoco podrá saber si la causa se debe a la falta de idoneidad del agente y sus capacidades para llevar a cabo la acción educativa de manera adecuada. Por estas razones, y como punto de partida, este modelo busca indagar sobre la alineación de los objetivos e incentivos compartidos del principal y agente. Si estos no lo están, aunque los otros factores jueguen a favor, es poco probable que el agente logre los objetivos deseados.

Desde la perspectiva de principal-agente, tal como se muestra en la Figura 1, el modelo RISE establece y analiza cuatro relaciones entre los actores del sistema educativo para evaluar su alineación y coherencia: (1) relación **Política** (entre ciudadanos y altas autoridades); (2) relación de **Pacto** (entre altas autoridades y organismos públicos sectoriales como el ministerio de educación); (3) relación de **Gestión** (entre el ministerio de educación y los agentes educativos como escuelas y docentes); y (4) relación de **Voz y Elección** (entre padres, apoderados, comunidad y los agentes educativos como escuelas y docentes).

Figura 1: Cuatro Relaciones Clave entre Principales y Agentes



Fuente: autores, basado en Spivack (2022).

Por su parte, tal como se muestra en el Cuadro 1, el modelo especifica cinco elementos o dimensiones que caracterizan cada una de esas relaciones: (1) delegación (el principal delega al agente un tipo de tareas); (2) financiamiento (el principal entrega recursos para la realización por parte del agente); (3) información (el principal evalúa el desempeño del agente); (4) motivación (el principal provee incentivos y alienta al agente); y (5) apoyo (el principal ofrece asistencia y soporte al agente para el logro de su tarea).

Cuadro 1: Cinco Dimensiones de las Relaciones Clave entre Principales y Agentes

Relaciones	POLÍTICA	PACTO	GESTIÓN	VOZ Y ELECCIÓN
	Ciudadanos Máximas autoridades	Máximas autoridades Autoridades educativas	Autoridades educativas Escuelas, docentes	Familias, comunidades, Escuelas, docentes, líderes educativos
DELEGACIÓN: Lo que el <i>principal</i> pide al <i>agente</i> que haga				
FINANZAS: Recursos que el <i>principal</i> le da al <i>agente</i> para que ejecute las obras.				
INFORMACIÓN: La usa el <i>principal</i> para evaluar desempeño de <i>agente</i> .				
APOYO: Asistencia y capacitación para que el <i>agente</i> haga su trabajo. Por ejemplo: Formación inicial y continua a docentes.				
MOTIVACIÓN: Puede ser extrínseca (mediada por el <i>principal</i>) o intrínseca (mediada por el <i>agente</i>)				

Fuente: autores, basado en Spivack (2022).

Desde una perspectiva sistémica, lo que se busca develar es el tipo de alineación que predomina en una relación o en la orientación de los actores hacia qué tipo de fines. En este sentido, observa el grado de consenso y coherencia en los fines de diferentes actores que conforman una relación. Alineaciones deseables, desde esta perspectiva, son aquellas que tienden al *aprendizaje*, esto es, que articulan las acciones para que los estudiantes desarrollen competencias, actitudes, habilidades y conocimientos relevantes. También es relevante, en ciertas etapas de desarrollo de los sistemas, la alineación al *acceso*, que pone foco en la expansión de cobertura y capacidad de los sistemas de integrar la mayor cantidad de estudiantes.

Por otra parte, pueden existir otras alineaciones que son perjudiciales para promover un sistema de calidad, inclusivo y equitativo. La alineación a la *selección* puede terminar segmentando y estratificando el sistema, poniendo demasiado énfasis en el desempeño académico de los estudiantes o abriendo mejores posibilidades tan solo a aquellos con mejor desempeño escolar, invisibilizando que este puede ser el resultado de variables subyacentes ligadas a desigualdades sociales. A su vez, dentro de las alineaciones indeseables, se encuentra la alineación al *clientelismo*, que busca la defensa de intereses personales o corporativos específicos de corto plazo (generalmente distintos a los de aprendizaje). Asimismo, se puede observar una alineación del sistema hacia el *cumplimiento* de procesos. Este pone el foco en las tareas burocráticas y logísticas, las actividades administrativas y el cumplimiento de informes, perdiéndose el foco de lo sustantivo: el logro de aprendizajes.

El informe que se presenta a continuación es el resultado de la aplicación, adaptada y contextualizada, de la metodología de pensamiento sistémico desarrollado por RISE para entender las problemáticas y nudos críticos del sistema educativo ecuatoriano.



3. Metodología

Esta investigación hace uso de métodos cualitativos y participativos de investigación social. Además, si bien utiliza información secundaria, se basa principalmente en fuentes primarias obtenidas a partir del trabajo de campo realizado en distintas regiones de Ecuador durante el primer semestre de 2022.

La metodología y etapas del estudio son consistentes con las sugerencias metodológicas propuestas por RISE (Silberstein y Spivack, 2022), con el fin de asegurar confiabilidad y comparabilidad de los resultados con estudios realizados en otros países. En concreto, el proceso de implementación de este diagnóstico se desarrolló en cuatro fases que se describen a continuación.

Durante la primera fase de revisión de documentación secundaria se consultó información disponible para describir y comprender las relaciones de responsabilidad del sistema educativo ecuatoriano. A su vez, se conformó un Comité Asesor, integrado por 14 expertos en educación (incluyendo a la ministra de Educación de Ecuador), creado para ofrecer orientaciones y retroalimentación sobre el diseño e implementación de este proyecto.

En la segunda fase se realizó un levantamiento de información primaria a través de tres grupos focales en tres ciudades del país: Quito (Región Andina), Guayaquil (Región Costa del Pacífico) y Tena (Región Amazónica). Participaron 47 representantes de diferentes

ámbitos y niveles del sistema educativo, con el fin de profundizar en el análisis y comprensión de cada una de las relaciones de responsabilidad entre principales y agentes del sistema educativo. Todos los grupos focales se registraron con el consentimiento de los participantes y luego se analizó el material recabado bajo las matrices de sistematización propuestas por RISE y adaptadas por el grupo de investigación. Este proceso fue la base para identificar las incoherencias, desalineaciones y las respectivas recomendaciones tendientes a solucionar los problemas identificados.

Durante la tercera fase se realizaron entrevistas individuales a algunos miembros de la comunidad educativa para buscar información adicional que permitiera profundizar el diagnóstico, en relación con temáticas tales como: financiamiento, gestión educativa, apoyo a directivos de escuelas, situación de docentes multigrado-rurales y sistema de acompañamiento a docentes.

En la cuarta fase se llevó a cabo un ejercicio de priorización, desarrollada en conjunto con el Comité Asesor del proyecto, con el fin de seleccionar las principales incoherencias y posibles soluciones.



4. El Sistema Educativo Ecuatoriano y sus Desafíos

El sistema educativo de Ecuador está regulado por la Constitución de la República de 2008 y la Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural de 2008. En ella se establece que el acceso de la ciudadanía a una educación gratuita y de calidad es un derecho que incluye todos los niveles educativos, esto es, desde educación inicial hasta educación superior (Ministerio de Educación, 2021). El presupuesto destinado a educación alcanza un 3,98% del PIB para el año 2021, lo que representa un 13,3% del presupuesto general del estado (Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas, 2022).

El Sistema Nacional de Educación contempla tanto educación escolarizada ordinaria como extraordinaria. La modalidad escolarizada es coordinada por el Ministerio de Educación de Ecuador; mientras que el ámbito de la educación no escolarizada está a cargo de la Subsecretaría de Cualificaciones Profesionales del Ministerio de Trabajo. El sistema educativo asegura también espacio a la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe y Etnoeducación, que tiene como desafío la preservación de los saberes y de las lenguas ancestrales. A nivel del ciclo escolar existen dos calendarios en el país: el calendario de la región Costa-Galápagos, que inicia su ciclo académico entre los meses de abril-mayo, y el calendario de la Sierra-Amazonía que lo hace en septiembre.

Dentro del marco legal instituido entre 2008 y 2012, el Ministerio de Educación adoptó un nuevo estatuto orgánico de gestión organizacional por procesos, y reordenó el

sistema educativo ecuatoriano en 9 zonas, 140 distritos y 1.142 circuitos educativos, mediante un nuevo modelo de gestión desconcentrada (Ministerio de Educación, 2012). Continúa siendo un gran desafío el fortalecimiento de la autonomía escolar y el empoderamiento de los directivos, con una formación pertinente, para que desarrollen liderazgo y un clima de aprendizaje con base en la colaboración y flexibilización organizacional para generar los cambios propuestos.

La educación escolarizada (Inicial, Primaria y Secundaria) se divide en educación pública (fiscal y municipal), fiscomisional (educación privada subvencionada por el Estado) y particular. Provee educación a más de 4.3 millones de estudiantes, distribuidos entre la educación pública, que alcanza un 78% de la matrícula; educación particular con un 16% y la educación fiscomisional que atiende un 6% de los estudiantes. De la población total de estudiantes, un 76% se educa en zonas urbanas y 26% en zonas rurales. Más de 203 mil docentes entregan educación en el sistema educativo ecuatoriano, 72% mujeres y 18% hombres, los que se distribuyen en más de 16 mil instituciones educativas.

Pese a los avances que Ecuador presenta a nivel de acceso, persisten todavía importantes desafíos en materia de calidad y equidad en los aprendizajes. Según las estadísticas de la UNESCO, durante la última década (2012-2020) la cobertura de educación inicial se ha mantenido constante, pasando de 52% a 54% con incrementos y descensos durante el período. La educación primaria ha mantenido su cobertura en torno al 92%, lo que da cuenta de la existencia de un grupo de niños y niñas (8%) que el sistema no ha logrado incorporar a la educación escolar. En educación secundaria, en cambio, se ha avanzado de forma significativa al pasar de un 75% en 2012 a un 86% en 2020 en cobertura neta. Pese a este progreso, un grupo no menor de jóvenes requiere ser incorporado al sistema para finalizar la educación secundaria.

Los desafíos del sistema permanecen a nivel de calidad y aprendizajes. Los resultados del sistema muestran, por ejemplo, un porcentaje de pobreza de aprendizaje comparativamente alto en relación con la región. Ecuador se sitúa por encima de la media regional con un 63% de estudiantes que no logra comprender un texto simple a los 10 años de edad (Banco Mundial, 2019). En matemáticas, según PISA, un 71% de los estudiantes presenta bajo desempeño, lo que visto por nivel socioeconómico revela que casi el 90% de los alumnos más pobres no alcanza los aprendizajes esperados, comparado con el 51% de los estudiantes no pobres (Bos, et. al., 2019).

A nivel de inversión educativa, Ecuador ha reducido la inversión en comparación con otros sectores del gasto público. De acuerdo con la UNESCO, en 2013 el gasto público en educación alcanzó un 5% del PIB, valor que disminuye significativamente hacia el 2021 con 3.9%. El gasto público anual por estudiante de educación primaria en Ecuador alcanza los US\$ 1,195 (PPP\$), valor significativamente más bajo que Chile (US\$ 4,571), Costa Rica (US\$ 4,365) y el promedio de la OCDE, que llega a US\$ 10,500 (UNESCO-UIS,

2022; OCDE, 2021). Como señala el BID, Ecuador es un país con una baja inversión por estudiante (US\$14,011 sumando el gasto en primaria y secundaria - entre 6 y 15 años), comparado con países como Costa Rica (US\$ 46,531) y Chile (US\$ 40,607) que invierten hasta tres veces más que Ecuador. Incluso más bajo en relación con el promedio reportado por los países de la OCDE (US\$90,294) (Bos, et. al., 2019).

A esta realidad estructural se suman, en la actualidad, los desafíos de recuperación de aprendizajes generados por la pandemia de COVID-19. Estos desafíos remiten a la necesidad de cerrar la brecha de aprendizajes entre los diversos grupos socioeconómicos, disminuir la deserción escolar y mejorar las condiciones de bienestar social y emocional de las comunidades educativas (Ministerio de Educación, 2021). En este contexto surge la pregunta de cómo es posible avanzar en la mejora de la calidad educativa y reducir las brechas de aprendizaje.



5. Análisis del Sistema Educativo Ecuatoriano Utilizando el Enfoque RISE: Resultados sobre Alineaciones e Incoherencias

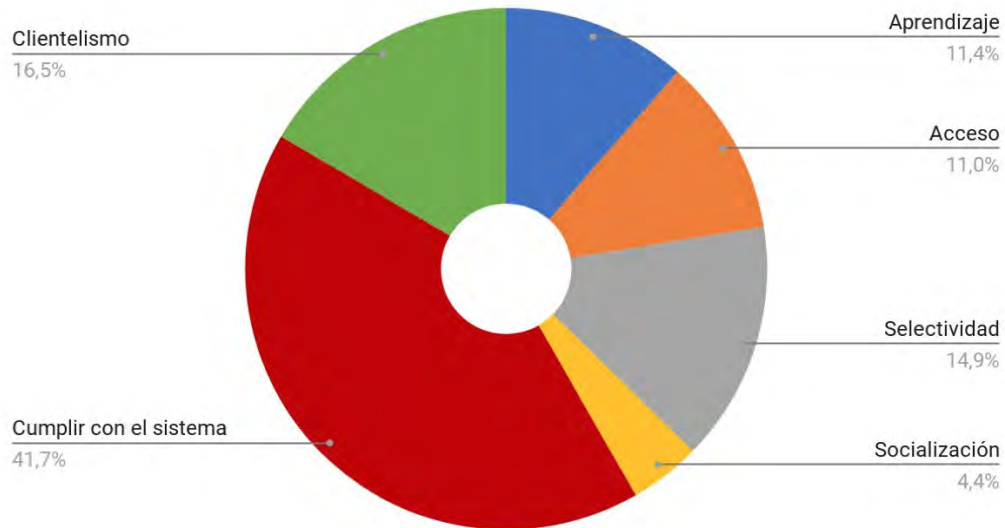
5.1. Alineaciones macro del sistema: un sistema desorientado

Durante el trabajo en terreno llevado a cabo en las distintas regiones del país se aplicó una encuesta a los participantes de cada grupo focal. En total, 47 encuestados provenientes de distintos estamentos y niveles del sistema educativo aportaron sus perspectivas. A continuación, se presentan los principales resultados que se obtuvieron del análisis de las encuestas realizadas, tal como se muestra en la Figura 2.

Según los participantes de este estudio, el sistema ecuatoriano se encuentra primordialmente alineado al cumplimiento de procesos formales y tareas administrativas. En efecto, 41.7% de los participantes destacan esta característica. De acuerdo con el marco RISE, el “cumplimiento del proceso” se refiere a la alineación enfocada en completar tareas de soporte, cumplimiento de labores burocráticas y cumplimiento de procesos administrativos de recursos humanos, finanzas, TIC, entre otros (Spivack, 2021). En este enfoque, el cumplimiento de las formalidades y normas procedimentales es priorizado por sobre los objetivos sustantivos y de calidad que dichas labores buscan asegurar.

En el caso ecuatoriano y según los participantes del estudio, si bien la Constitución de 2008 y las leyes subsecuentes establecen que los actores del sistema educativo (principales y agentes) deben estar alineados con el aprendizaje, los distintos mecanismos de control burocrático instalados en el sistema refuerzan (de facto) un enfoque de mimetismo isomórfico².

Figura 2: Alineación General del Sistema Educativo³.



Fuente: Autores, basado en resultados de encuestas.

Bajo este paradigma, prevalece lo formal y procedimental por sobre los fines a los cuales dichos procedimientos están destinados a servir. Si bien diversos actores declaran que esta lógica fue diseñada e impulsada con el fin de aumentar el control y supervisión sobre los actores, evitando la corrupción y mal aprovechamiento de los recursos públicos, en la práctica tiende a inmovilizar a los agentes y limitar la eficacia en alcanzar mayores niveles de calidad educativa, pues toda acción o decisión es escrutada por los niveles superiores y penalizada en caso de que no concuerde con los criterios, no siempre claros, de la normativa o autoridades de turno. En consecuencia, predomina la desconfianza y el temor a las implicancias legales ligadas a no seguir los procedimientos establecidos. Por lo tanto, esta alineación está basada en la contabilidad de la gestión de los recursos con los respectivos informes de Contraloría General del Estado y sus posibles observaciones, más que en la rendición de cuentas sobre la responsabilidad en los logros y resultados educativos.

- 2 Mimetismo isomórfico es un proceso a través del cual los sistemas adoptan la forma externa de las organizaciones más capaces, pero sin necesariamente desarrollar genuinamente las respectivas capacidades internas (Spivack, 2022: 13).
- 3 Esta figura representa una descripción general de la alineación del sistema. Metodológicamente, estos porcentajes provienen de una encuesta aplicada a 47 encuestados que evalúan las relaciones de pacto, gestión y voz y elección. Los participantes tuvieron la posibilidad de expresar sus puntos de vista, seleccionando qué tipo de alineación (una o ninguna de las seis del gráfico) caracteriza cada una de las relaciones y sus elementos.

Este enfoque no solo es detectado por los actores a nivel nacional, sino a nivel zonal, distrital y local. Según los participantes, las autoridades de los distritos y los directores de escuelas mantienen un enfoque predominantemente administrativo y alineado con el *cumplimiento de procesos*, impidiendo que los docentes puedan alinearse al logro de aprendizajes de sus estudiantes. En efecto, la sobrecarga que generan los diversos informes y reportes que deben realizar les impide contar con el tiempo necesario para planificar adecuadamente sus clases, mejorar sus prácticas pedagógicas y proveer retroalimentación a sus alumnos.

En segundo lugar, los actores destacan un alineamiento consistente con un enfoque “clientelista” (16.5%). Esta alineación se “caracteriza por buscar objetivos políticos a corto plazo, [donde] el sistema educativo se utiliza como herramienta de clientelismo” (Spivack, 2021: 10). En vez de enfocarse en la búsqueda de aprendizajes, esta alineación genera una coordinación tácita y viciosa de los agentes, a favor de sus intereses particulares, utilizando los recursos del sistema de manera ineficiente e ineficaz. De acuerdo con los participantes del estudio, en el caso ecuatoriano se observa un alto grado de clientelismo, sobre todo en la gestión del desarrollo profesional docente; en particular, en lo referido a la asignación de docentes y en la selección de autoridades educativas (por ejemplo, director de escuela o de distrito). En muchos casos se seleccionan perfiles políticos, en detrimento de perfiles profesionales adecuados, afectando la calidad de los aprendizajes y la motivación de los profesores.

En tercer lugar, se resalta el rasgo de “selectividad” (14,9%), entendida como un alineamiento que promueve una lógica de segmentación al interior del sistema, clasificando a los estudiantes en escuelas y/o niveles educativos, según su desempeño académico, el cual inevitablemente se asocia también a la pertenencia étnica o al origen socioeconómico. En el caso ecuatoriano, funcionarios de alto nivel del Ministerio de Educación y expertos expresaron que la alineación hacia la selectividad se manifiesta en el énfasis desmedido que se pone en las escuelas emblemáticas, a pesar de servir a una proporción reducida de alumnos del sistema.

Tan solo en un cuarto y quinto lugar, 11.4% y 11% de los encuestados, respectivamente, declara que los actores y actividades del sistema se orientan hacia el logro de los objetivos de “aprendizaje” y “acceso”. Ambos debieran ser la principal orientación del sistema educativo, entendiendo que, sin el aseguramiento de un acceso universal, no es posible constituir un sistema de calidad para todos y todas. A su vez, el acceso no asegura aprendizajes significativos para la vida en sociedad.

En el caso ecuatoriano, si bien los participantes de los talleres manifestaron su deseo y motivación de alinearse con el aprendizaje, alegan que el sistema educativo no provee suficientes recursos económicos, ni posee los mecanismos adecuados de financiamiento, ni los apoyos pedagógicos pertinentes y contextualizados para impulsar esta alineación.

A su vez, y a pesar de los importantes esfuerzos de presentar información a través del portal de Datos Abiertos, el Ministerio de Educación aún no cuenta con un Sistema de Información de Gestión Educativa (SIGED) suficientemente consolidado, con datos digitalizados y articulados, que brinde información permanente sobre las responsabilidades en el logro de objetivos y resultados educativos, optimizando el trabajo administrativo y facilitando el análisis de la efectividad de las políticas públicas.

En conclusión, el análisis de los resultados revela que existe una percepción dominante respecto a que los actores del sistema se alinean hacia el cumplimiento de procesos burocráticos. Estos resultados también muestran que existe una multiplicidad de objetivos en el sistema. Estos pueden llevar a que los distintos actores realicen acciones divergentes y contradictorias, que los desvían del objetivo fundamental de “aprendizaje”, como ocurre cuando algunos agentes se encuentran alineados a objetivos clientelistas y de selectividad. En este sentido, parece clave la necesidad de alinear la visión del sistema hacia un objetivo común, que canalice y movilice los esfuerzos colectivos.

5.2. Incoherencias respecto al aprendizaje: nudos críticos en las relaciones de principal-agente del sistema educativo

Esta sección identifica y discute las principales incoherencias del sistema educativo ecuatoriano, a partir de la aplicación del marco RISE y de la información recabada en las entrevistas, encuestas y discusiones de los grupos focales.

Para cada una de las incoherencias identificadas se describe el problema e incongruencia, y se presentan ejemplos concretos que permitan respaldar con evidencia dicho nudo crítico. Si bien se consideran las distintas relaciones existentes en el marco RISE, el foco de esta sección está puesto principalmente en la relación de “Gestión”, que describe la relación del ministerio de educación (Principal) con las escuelas, directivos y profesores (agentes). Las otras relaciones del marco RISE, en especial, las de Pacto y Voz y Elección, se incluyen en función de la incidencia negativa que puedan tener en la relación de Gestión.

5.2.1. Incoherencias de financiamiento: desafíos en las relaciones de Pacto y Gestión

a) Gasto público en educación: De Jure vs De Facto

La reforma constitucional de 2008 estableció que Ecuador debe incrementar anualmente el gasto público en educación en 0.5% del PIB, hasta llegar a un gasto mínimo del 6% del PIB. Si bien hubo un histórico incremento llegando a un máximo de 5,3% en 2014, en 2021 el presupuesto había disminuido a 3,98% del PIB (Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas, 2022). Esto muestra la incoherencia a nivel de la relación de Pacto entre lo declarado en la constitución (de jure) y lo que realmente el país y sus máximas autoridades

efectivamente asignan al sector educativo, disminuyendo (de facto) los recursos con que cuenta el ministerio de educación para lograr sus objetivos.

b) Contradicciones y conflictos entre los directores

Existen incoherencias a nivel de financiamiento en la relación de Pacto. Estas se observan cuando dos máximas autoridades nacionales (ambas actuando como principal), solicitan acciones contradictorias al Ministerio de Educación (en su calidad de agente), que involucran partidas del presupuesto nacional. Por ejemplo, en 2020 la Asamblea Nacional aprobó un aumento salarial para los docentes, equivalente a un incremento en el presupuesto del 22%, que implicaba ampliar el déficit fiscal del gobierno por sobre los US\$ 6.000 millones (Gómez, 2021). Este aumento obligaba al Ministerio de Educación a realizar los ajustes salariales, en circunstancia en que el Ministerio de Finanzas no contaba con las provisiones en el presupuesto nacional para asignar dichos recursos a educación. Ante esta contradicción, fue necesaria la intervención de un tercer actor, como la Corte Constitucional, que impusiera al Ministerio de Finanzas la modificación de la partida presupuestaria para cumplir con el incremento salarial y con la asignación de recursos al Ministerio de Educación. De acuerdo con los entrevistados, este tipo de situaciones no son excepcionales.

5.2.2. Incoherencias entre el mandato recibido por las escuelas de parte del ministerio que compromete entregar una educación de calidad y la insuficiente entrega de apoyos pedagógicos y recursos específicos para el mejoramiento continuo en las escuelas

c) Incongruencia entre la exigencia de calidad y la falta de autonomía de las escuelas, en un contexto de desconcentración

La toma de decisiones se encuentra centralizada en los estamentos ministeriales (principal), a pesar de tener un sistema de gestión que declara y busca la desconcentración, por lo que las escuelas (agentes) no tienen autonomía sobre cómo se invierten los recursos para alcanzar las metas educativas. En efecto, la ejecución presupuestaria del Ministerio de Educación se reestructuró con la reforma legal de 2010 y el estatuto orgánico por procesos de 2011, dando paso a un modelo de desconcentración de la ejecución presupuestaria. Bajo este nuevo esquema, cada una de las nueve zonas territoriales del país ejecuta el presupuesto que le asigna la oficina central. A su vez, estas zonas derivan la ejecución a las direcciones distritales, quienes gestionan recursos para abastecer a las escuelas de los insumos y personal necesarios para su operación. Los actores locales entrevistados expresan que esta asignación carece muchas veces de coherencia y criterios claros. Este modelo de ejecución presupuestaria no contempla un presupuesto específico a nivel de escuela, sino solo a nivel de distrito.

El objetivo de esta medida buscaba descongestionar de tareas administrativas a los directivos de las instituciones educativas para que pudieran enfocarse con mayor énfasis

en lo pedagógico (Modelo de Gestión Educativa, 2012). Sin embargo, si bien esta reforma pretende impulsar un mayor traspaso de las decisiones desde el nivel central al local, en la práctica significa que las escuelas no poseen control sobre su presupuesto (ya que se decide a nivel del distrito), restringiéndose su autonomía y flexibilidad para atender sus necesidades locales.

La diferencia esencial entre los procesos de desconcentración y descentralización estaría dada por “el otorgamiento de personalidad jurídica, de individualidad propia, que faltaría en el primer caso y existiría en el segundo” (Rojas, et. al. 2021: 95). Dicho de otro modo, en la desconcentración, el órgano central continúa ejerciendo control jerárquico sobre el órgano desconcentrado (Mora, 2006: 69). Esta diferencia es clave a la hora de repensar los desafíos de la descentralización del sistema educativo ecuatoriano.

d) Los recursos destinados a la mejora educativa son insuficientes

Cuando se analizan históricamente los ítems de ejecución presupuestaria se evidencia que, en el presupuesto corriente, aproximadamente 87% se destina a salarios de funcionarios (maestros y personal administrativo), mientras que apenas el restante 13% se destina a recursos escolares (textos, uniformes y desayunos escolares) (Ministerio de Educación, 2022). Es decir, existe una proporción muy menor de recursos “libres” destinados al mejoramiento pedagógico.

Si bien el Ministerio de Educación (principal en la relación de gestión) delega a las escuelas la provisión de una educación de calidad, no entrega los apoyos financieros necesarios para que la escuela pueda hacerse asesorar o cubrir la implementación de sus propios planes de mejoramiento pedagógico. En efecto, no existe el financiamiento adecuado para responder a las demandas de calidad provenientes de la planta central y de los distritos como: la implementación de Proyecto Educativo Institucional (PEI), el Plan Operativo Anual (POA), el Plan Institucional de Continuidad Educativa (PICE), los planes de mejora pedagógica identificados por asesores del Plan de Apoyo y Seguimiento, o el apoyo que requiere el Departamento de Consejería Estudiantil (DECE). Tal como declara una participante, “piden calidad de gestión desde planta central y distritos, mientras que las escuelas pedimos los recursos necesarios” (directora, taller Tena, 2022). Esta tensión e incoherencia se hace patente en los discursos de distintos actores.

Esta falta de apoyos es particularmente grave en las escuelas con mayores necesidades socioeducativas y aquellas ubicadas en zonas rurales. En estos casos, con frecuencia, las escuelas terminan acudiendo al apoyo financiero que son capaces de entregar las familias, a pesar de su propia situación de vulnerabilidad social. Por ejemplo, los padres de familia que participaron en los talleres manifestaron que, a pesar de que se afirma que la educación es gratuita, las escuelas los presionan continuamente a entregar aportes

(para el mejoramiento continuo, materiales educativos, mantenimiento, infraestructura), porque el gobierno no entrega los recursos suficientes para cubrir esas necesidades. Existe también un problema en la “oportunidad” del traspaso de los recursos para el mejoramiento desde el nivel central al local. Esto se debe a que el proceso de aprobación de las solicitudes de las necesidades de los distritos y la asignación presupuestaria respectiva comienza al inicio de cada año y llega a la escuela cuatro o cinco meses después, cuando el año escolar ya está muy avanzado y las necesidades han aumentado o ya se han suplido mediante acciones, referidas localmente como de “autogestión”. Por ejemplo, a través de alianzas con empresas locales o donaciones realizadas por las familias.

5.2.3. Inconsistencias entre el mandato de brindar educación de calidad y la insuficiente provisión de apoyo, autonomía y capacitación a directores y docentes

e) Debilidad en los sistemas y equipos técnicos del ministerio para el apoyo y supervisión pedagógica en las escuelas

“¿Cuánto y cómo se apoya a la escuela? En realidad, lo que ocurre es que la escuela está presionada desde los dos frentes: el gobierno y la sociedad”, concluye un académico en taller de Guayaquil (2022).

El modelo nacional de Apoyo y Seguimiento a la Gestión Educativa (MNASGE) fue aprobado en el 2013, luego de la creación del Programa de Mentoría (2010), en el marco de la Nueva Constitución del 2008 y el consiguiente reordenamiento de la estructura del Estado; la Nueva Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural (LOEI-2011); el Reglamento General a la Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural (2012); y el Acuerdo Ministerial 020-12 en el que se encuentra el Estatuto Orgánico de Gestión Organizacional por Procesos del Ministerio de Educación.

Actualmente, el modelo de apoyo y seguimiento del Ministerio de Educación cuenta con 116 asesores, 46 auditores educativos y 217 docentes que se encontraban en formación de mentores. Entre estos, 154 ya no están en el programa y el resto dedica únicamente 20% de su jornada a labores de mentoría en sus instituciones educativas. Por lo tanto, el personal destinado al apoyo y seguimiento pedagógico no logra abastecer a todo el sistema educativo (Mineduc, 2022). En efecto, diversos participantes del estudio hicieron referencia al insuficiente acompañamiento pedagógico recibido. Por ejemplo, en Tena se argumentaba que existían “menos de 10 mentores para apoyar pedagógicamente a aproximadamente 1.500 escuelas” (autoridad ministerial local, taller Tena 2022).

Esta escasez se debe a la falta de fortalecimiento del Programa de Mentoría, que tiene como objetivo proveer acompañamiento pedagógico en el aula a los docentes de escuelas fiscales, sobre todo de bajo rendimiento en la evaluación nacional y en zonas rurales. Estos mentores deberían cumplir “un papel formativo, transmitiendo su saber a los docentes de aula mediante talleres de capacitación, la observación y retroalimentación de su práctica” (Vezub, 2011: 13).

Asimismo, el sistema de apoyo psicoemocional se encuentra desfinanciado y, consecuentemente, el Departamento de Consejería (DECE) posee una escasez de profesionales para el apoyo psicológico. Esta situación se ha modificado con la reciente Ley (LOEI reformada, 2021) que busca fortalecer el eje de calidad y bienestar estudiantil. Por lo tanto, constituye un reto para el ejecutivo (Ministerio de Finanzas, Ministerio de Trabajo y Ministerio de Educación) implementar las disposiciones legales.

Por último, el problema del modelo de apoyo y seguimiento no solo radica en el insuficiente número de asesores pedagógicos y profesionales afines, sino que en la confusión respecto a su rol, el cual combina en la práctica elementos de fiscalización de normas, supervisión de procesos, y apoyo pedagógico. Este último rol es identificado por los participantes del estudio como el más débil y menos frecuente. Por ejemplo, en el informe de Sistematización del Programa de Acompañamiento Pedagógico, en Esmeraldas y Sucumbíos de UNICEF (2019), se afirma que una debilidad importante es que el distrito no cuenta con un departamento pedagógico.

f) Los procesos de selección, formación y remuneración de los directores son inadecuados para promover un liderazgo escolar que promueva el aprendizaje

El marco legal de Educación posee un estatuto orgánico de gestión organizacional por procesos, estructurado en 1.142 circuitos educativos, la unidad administrativa más pequeña del sistema. Este diseño busca desconcentrar tareas ministeriales, pero sin asegurar los recursos y capacidades a nivel escolar para garantizar la eficacia en la gestión de los procesos pedagógicos. Así, la autonomía escolar y el empoderamiento de los directivos continúa siendo un desafío para el fortalecimiento del sistema educativo. Como señala Pavo et al. (2021) “existe una concepción burocrática de los planes educativos institucionales y los códigos de convivencia, lo que puede ser una evidencia de falta de liderazgo en las instituciones educativas”.

Si bien existen estándares de calidad para directivos (Ministerio de Educación, 2017), aún no hay procesos formales de formación inicial y continua. Además, se puede acceder al cargo de director de un centro educativo público por diversas vías: por nombramiento –a través de concursos públicos de selección basados en el mérito y oposición–, o por designación –mediante el nombramiento como director encargado–, el cual posee la misma carga laboral que el director con nombramiento, pero sin la misma remuneración económica. La mayoría de los directores escolares son docentes designados para el cargo. Es decir, no están formados ni remunerados de acuerdo con su rol y responsabilidad, lo que afecta negativamente su desempeño y motivación. De hecho, solo 429 directores escolares reciben un salario equivalente a sus funciones, mientras que más de 5.000 docentes tienen funciones directivas sin remuneración de directivo, ya que por falta de presupuesto no se han realizado los respectivos concursos de selección de directivos (Distributivo de Personal, 2022).

Asimismo, las entrevistas con diversos actores destacan los altos niveles de politización en el nombramiento de autoridades a nivel de distritos y escuelas, alineándose hacia el cumplimiento del proceso y el clientelismo, y desviándose algunas veces de un proceso técnico de selección de directores para asegurar y promover el aprendizaje.

g) El desarrollo profesional docente desvinculado de las necesidades pedagógicas del trabajo en el aula

El sistema educativo de Ecuador ha establecido que el rol de los docentes es primordial en la mejora de la calidad educativa. Sin embargo, la carrera docente no cuenta con un enfoque formativo que consolide el conocimiento disciplinar y desarrolle competencias pedagógicas efectivas, sino que en la práctica se encuentra orientado a lo administrativo y al cumplimiento de procesos y tareas burocráticas definidas desde el nivel ministerial. Esto se vuelve particularmente relevante si se observan los resultados de la evaluación nacional “Ser Maestro” que muestra un porcentaje importante de docentes con bajo nivel de desempeño, por ejemplo, a nivel de conocimientos disciplinares. De hecho, más del 50% de la población evaluada se ubica entre los rangos bajo y estándar (Ministerio de Educación, 2021). En esta misma línea, otros estudios muestran que “la mitad de los y las docentes está anclada en una pedagogía tradicional, transmisiva [y posee] falta de experiencia profesional.” (Pavo et al., 2021).

Por otra parte, en algunos casos diversos actores declaran que muchos docentes construyen su identidad a partir de su rol dentro de la burocracia estatal, en detrimento de su rol como docentes impulsores del aprendizaje de sus estudiantes. Por ejemplo, como mencionó uno de los miembros del comité asesor del proyecto, “los docentes de escuelas públicas tienden a verse a sí mismos más como servidores públicos que como maestros, donde las tareas administrativas son centrales para el cumplimiento con el sistema”. En concordancia con la alineación hacia el cumplimiento, que caracteriza la relación de Gestión entre el Ministerio de Educación y los docentes, un participante señala que “el Mineduc manda órdenes al zonal, y el zonal al distrital, éste al directivo y este último al docente. Es una gran cadena. Cada uno cumple. Cumplir por cumplir, pero no hay retroalimentación” (Director, taller Tena, 2022).

Si bien los concursos de ingreso a la carrera promueven la estabilidad laboral y el desarrollo profesional, la evidencia en Ecuador muestra que la productividad promedio de los docentes se mantiene alta durante los primeros 5 a 10 años de carrera, por lo que un sistema de promoción e incentivos y apoyo pedagógico a lo largo de la vida profesional es una necesidad de primera prioridad (Ponce y Drouet, 2018). A su vez, de acuerdo con los testimonios de algunos participantes, en los concursos no siempre se seleccionan los perfiles profesionales más adecuados, por lo que hay la percepción de que operan consideraciones políticas y clientelares a nivel local que terminan incidiendo en las posibilidades de mejora educativa o en la motivación de los docentes.

Este sistema de ingreso y promoción de la carrera docente está basado en conocimientos disciplinares, títulos obtenidos y años de experiencia (LOEI, 2021; Acuerdo Ministerial del MINEDUC 2021-00007-A y 2018-00025-A). Sin embargo, las competencias y habilidades desarrolladas parecen ser insuficientes para potenciar mayores niveles de aprendizaje efectivo en el aula. Por ejemplo, según un docente de los grupos focales, “los docentes no reciben tutoría ni apoyo, y tienen escasa preparación sobre necesidades educativas especiales”.

A su vez, algunos docentes manifiestan carecer de una cantidad de horas no lectivas suficientes para realizar adecuadamente las labores de planificación de sus clases, evaluación del aprendizaje y retroalimentación formativa a sus estudiantes. En efecto, tal como señala una maestra participante del estudio, “la reducción de horas pedagógicas (de 30 a 25) que se definió por la reforma a la Ley, no se implementa. Los docentes aún cuentan con un exceso de sobrecarga administrativa” (Maestra, taller Tena, 2022).

Sumado a lo anterior, existe la percepción de que la carrera docente no es valorada socialmente y que el sistema tampoco reconoce a los docentes que logran buenos resultados de aprendizaje para ser promovidos (Exdirectivo, taller Tena, 2022). Es clave aprender de la experiencia de programas de Formación Docente permanente con iniciativas como el “SiProfe”, que tuvo una inversión sostenida entre el 2016-2022, con más de 40 millones de dólares de inversión; o del Plan Nacional de Formación Permanente que busca fortalecer las capacidades docentes al mediano plazo (Mineduc, 2022).

Asimismo, resulta prioritario repensar el desarrollo profesional docente en servicio, poniendo especial atención a los procesos de acompañamiento y apoyo con foco en el trabajo pedagógico y las prácticas docentes dentro del aula. Tal como señalan diversos funcionarios del ministerio, actualmente los docentes reciben muy limitadas instancias de formación presencial, y las que reciben de manera virtual son asincrónicas (es decir, son en línea y sin tutores que promuevan la reflexión y acompañen simultáneamente el proceso formativo).

Cabe destacar que el Ministerio está realizando esfuerzos en esta línea, por ejemplo, a través de la creación del Laboratorio de Innovación Educativa, cuyo foco es fortalecer las prácticas docentes. Se espera que esta iniciativa provea información y difusión sobre buenas prácticas docentes, a fin de compartirlas, difundirlas y reconocer el esfuerzo de los docentes.

5.2.4. Entre lo estandarizado y lo contextualizado: Inconsistencias entre las necesidades nacionales y las adaptaciones locales

h) Educación Intercultural Bilingüe y Etnoeducación: nacional vs. local

A pesar de los avances en incrementar la autonomía de la Secretaría de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe - SIEB (Reforma de la LOEI), aún persisten dificultades en la

relación de gestión del ministerio y los organismos encargados de asegurar la provisión de educación intercultural bilingüe en Ecuador. Dichas dificultades se expresan en las decisiones que se toman centralmente sin considerar las necesidades de las comunidades y territorios. Por ejemplo, en relación con la infraestructura, un docente en Tena señala que “un aula tipo en la Sierra con ventanas pequeñas de 40cm x 40cm, no funciona en la Amazonía por el clima, deben ser más grandes” (Docente, taller Tena, 2022). Asimismo, se menciona frecuentemente que las orientaciones de alimentación entregadas por el ministerio son concebidas para una población general, pero no son contextualizadas. Por ejemplo, se señala que los niños indígenas no toman leche de vaca pues no están acostumbrados y por ende la desechan. Esto perjudica la nutrición e ingesta calórica diaria de los estudiantes, y significa un desperdicio de recursos.

Por otra parte, el problema de la falta de dominio en algunos docentes de las lenguas ancestrales de las minorías étnicas es particularmente relevante. En Ecuador no hay suficientes docentes que hablen las lenguas originarias, lo que termina provocando que se asignen maestros no especializados para enseñar en las comunidades indígenas. Un docente expresa que dotar a las escuelas en la Amazonía con profesores locales “debe ser una prioridad el docente de habla hispana no entiende a sus estudiantes y viceversa” (Docente jubilada, taller Tena, 2022). Además, este problema es percibido como un riesgo para la conservación de los saberes ancestrales.

Adicionalmente, lo curricular aparece como un aspecto problemático. A pesar de los esfuerzos de la SEIB en contextualizar y adaptar el contenido, existe la percepción en muchos actores del sistema escolar, que en realidad se implementa un currículo nacional con escasa o nula adaptación al contexto. Esto hace que las escuelas, docentes y familias se sientan ajenos al proceso de aprendizaje. En esta línea, un docente señala que “en la escuela se repite lo que dice planta central. Ante cualquier cambio, la respuesta es: no, porque así está escrito. Lo dice el reglamento” (Docente, taller Tena, 2022).

Los testimonios anteriores contrastan con los avances establecidos en la normativa legal. El artículo 6 de la ley (LOEI 2019) establece que el currículo se aplicará en los idiomas oficiales de las diversas nacionalidades de Ecuador, respetando una perspectiva plurinacional e intercultural, debiendo ser contextualizado de acuerdo con las especificidades culturales.

i) Complejidades curriculares: cambios continuos, rigideces y contextualización

A pesar de la delegación proveniente de la relación de pacto (principal) de promover la contextualización del aprendizaje, el currículo se implementa en la relación de gestión con lineamientos estandarizados y con escaso apoyo y capacitación del docente (agente) sobre cómo contextualizar los contenidos, especialmente en la educación rural con diversidad cultural y alumnos con necesidades específicas.

La gestión pedagógica estandarizada contradice la delegación de flexibilización y contextualización curricular. En la práctica, a partir del currículo nacional, la institución establece su Proyecto Educativo Institucional (PEI) y el Plan Curricular Institucional (PCI). A pesar de los esfuerzos de acompañamiento a través de asesores y auditores educativos, y de iniciativas como el programa Aprender a Tiempo, una docente afirma: “el docente no tiene capacidad para aterrizar el currículo en el contexto. Tenemos que implementarlo a como dé lugar. La calidad está basada en la lógica del rendimiento y la calificación” (Docente, taller Tena, 2022).

Por otra parte, la contextualización permanente del currículum, siendo un proceso lento y complejo, se ve perjudicado por los constantes cambios y ajustes curriculares realizados por el ministerio desde el nivel central. Estos se realizan sin brindar suficiente acompañamiento pedagógico a directivos y docentes para realizar las adecuaciones. Por ejemplo, una dirigente gremial expresó su inconformidad por los continuos ajustes curriculares de la pandemia, con el currículo priorizado en emergencia y luego el currículo priorizado con énfasis en competencias (Resolución Nro. MINEDUC-SFE-2021-00008-R). Según señaló, “son dos iniciativas en menos de 6 meses, y cuando los docentes se están formando en una iniciativa pedagógica, surge una nueva” (Dirigente, taller Guayaquil, 2022).

La alineación hacia el aprendizaje se ve dificultada ya que existe la percepción de que el Ministerio de Educación cambia a menudo los lineamientos y orientaciones, lo que genera que las escuelas no reciban la información de manera oportuna para poder implementar los cambios a nivel local. Según los entrevistados, las delegaciones del Ministerio pueden ser contradictorias, repetitivas o extemporáneas al momento de aplicarse en el territorio (Taller Guayaquil, 2022). A su vez, algunos expresan que “hay muchos cambios de autoridad, por lo que no hay consistencia con las medidas o políticas implementadas. Cada uno desbarata lo que hizo el anterior. No hay continuidad, coherencia. Ausencia absoluta de políticas de largo plazo” (Taller Tena, 2022).

j) Evaluaciones: estandarizar, contextualizar y retroalimentar

Existe una incoherencia entre las orientaciones generales del currículum y las evaluaciones nacionales. Mientras que el currículum oficial diseñado desde las autoridades centrales apunta a impulsar un proceso de aprendizaje integral, las evaluaciones estandarizadas elaboradas por INEVAL tan solo abarcan algunas disciplinas, es decir, una parte minoritaria del currículum nacional. Esto genera una incoherencia y señales contradictorias hacia los docentes, los cuales deben decidir entre enseñar el currículum integral o enfocar los esfuerzos en las áreas evaluadas por INEVAL. Este proceso puede conllevar a un indeseado proceso conocido como estrechamiento curricular.

Adicionalmente, INEVAL evalúa a los docentes de manera estandarizada, lo que inhibe la gestión de enseñanza contextualizada. En este sentido, en la gestión curricular hay un desfase entre el documento técnico y la práctica docente en el aula.

A su vez, la evaluación a estudiantes y docentes no genera suficiente información sobre otras dimensiones, como las habilidades socioemocionales. Este desajuste entre lo que se evalúa y lo que se enseña genera problemas de planificación a largo plazo que afectan la transparencia en la evaluación y el uso de la información (Chiriboga, 2021).

Por otra parte, la información generada por las evaluaciones nacionales no es efectivamente aprovechada por el Ministerio de Educación para ofrecer retroalimentación focalizada a las escuelas. Tampoco es utilizada para establecer estrategias de andamiaje o reconocimiento para mejorar el desempeño de directores, docentes y estudiantes. En este contexto, un experto en educación afirma: “El sistema educativo no hace seguimiento a la escuela, y solo lo hace a través de los resultados que logra el estudiante en las pruebas estandarizadas...es un seguimiento incompleto y unidireccional”. Es decir, las evaluaciones sumativas estandarizadas no son complementadas con retroalimentación formativa e información significativa para apoyar la práctica docente contextualizada.

Por su parte, funcionarios del INEVAL mencionan que los procesos de enseñanza no siempre contemplan el currículo y los estándares, por lo que su evaluación se vuelve altamente compleja. En este sentido, el uso de la información de la evaluación es limitado, entre otras cosas porque las evaluaciones están alejadas de la realidad de las aulas, según lo manifiestan los actores.

k) Incongruencias en el papel de la familia en el proceso de aprendizaje: Limitada implicación y participación vinculante de las familias en los centros escolares

De acuerdo con el artículo 2, literal “o”, de la LOEI, las familias y las comunidades, como parte integrante de la sociedad civil, tienen pleno derecho a participar en la toma de decisiones de la escuela. Sin embargo, los participantes en los talleres afirman que, en la práctica, este mandato no se cumple a cabalidad, ya que existe una brecha significativa entre lo que establece la norma y el rol efectivo otorgado a los padres y/o representantes en el proceso educativo.

El marco legal promueve la participación ciudadana en la gestión educativa (Art.85 y 100, Constitución, 2008.Art. 2, LOEI, 2011). Sin embargo, en la práctica las familias no cuentan con la información pertinente de parte de los directivos y docentes, ni mecanismos claros y efectivos de participación en la toma de decisiones en la escuela. Por ejemplo, durante 2014-2015 se eliminaron una gran cantidad de escuelas que estaban cercanas a las comunidades rurales e indígenas. Como consecuencia, algunos estudiantes se vieron obligados a viajar enormes distancias o incluso a abandonar la escuela (Plan V, 2017). Esto muestra la escasa incidencia de las familias en este tipo de decisiones de política educativa.

Esta escasa participación se refleja también con mayor claridad en los comités de apoderados y familias, cuya contribución a la toma de decisiones se centra sobre todo en

problemas cotidianos y de forma, relacionados con la solicitud de aportes voluntarios para mantener la infraestructura, realizar eventos, etc. No suele haber un foco en los problemas sustantivos, como la calidad de la educación, ni en cómo abordarlos colectiva y estratégicamente.

El involucramiento de los padres y/o representantes legales también se limita a identificar los resultados de los aprendizajes, que se reflejan mayormente en las calificaciones, y en el posible acceso de sus hijos a la educación superior. Es decir, las familias están evaluando la información escolar desde las calificaciones y no desde el aprendizaje, tal como lo expresó un docente: “Lo importante para los padres es que sus hijos no fracasen y salgan adelante; que les demos buena nota, eso es todo” (Docente, taller Tena, 2022). De acuerdo con el testimonio de algunos participantes, lo anterior se traduce, en diversos casos, en apatía y falta de interés de las familias por participar en el proceso educativo de sus hijos (motivación): “Los padres no se interesan y se han vuelto pasivos y facilistas. La escuela requiere apoyo de la comunidad, pero el sistema no los motiva a participar” (Taller Quito, 2022).



6. Conclusiones: Recomendaciones priorizadas

De acuerdo con la información recabada y los testimonios de los distintos actores del sistema educativo, se observa que en diversos ámbitos existe la tendencia a establecer relaciones en las que predomina una lógica de cumplimiento de procesos burocráticos y administrativos. Si bien se reconoce el valor de un sistema que busca funcionar con parámetros administrativos comunes y claros, aún permanece el riesgo de que los actores pierdan de vista el objetivo sustantivo de su labor y no logren alinearse para promover el logro de aprendizajes. En este marco y pese a ser la alineación dominante, tendencias hacia el clientelismo o la selectividad parecen jugar un rol igualmente importante en el tipo de incoherencias que caracterizan el sistema educativo ecuatoriano.

A partir de este diagnóstico general, la presente investigación exploratoria ha permitido identificar diversas áreas prioritarias de reforma para avanzar en la mejora de los aprendizajes. En concreto, cuatro tipos de acciones emergen como prioritarias⁴: (1) hacer efectiva la promesa del financiamiento para dotar de mayores recursos al sistema educativo, y coherencia entre las tareas y responsabilidades delegadas al ministerio de educación por las máximas autoridades del país; (2) alinear las estructuras de gestión central y local hacia el mejoramiento pedagógico de las escuelas; (3) fortalecer los sistemas de apoyo y acompañamiento al trabajo de directivos y docentes y (4) balancear de

⁴ Las recomendaciones desarrolladas en este apartado provienen en su mayoría del taller de priorización de incoherencias que tuvo lugar junio de 2022. En este se solicitó al Comité Asesor del proyecto que identificara las incoherencias prioritarias según el impacto percibido en la mejora de los aprendizajes.

manera virtuosa las expectativas de aprendizaje esperado, contenidas en el currículum nacional, con la demanda de dar mayor contextualización a los procesos de enseñanza.

Resulta prioritario avanzar en *incrementar los niveles de financiamiento del sistema educativo ecuatoriano*, apuntando hacia el nivel que el propio país ha definido en torno al 6% del PIB. El gasto público en educación, expresado como porcentaje del PIB, ha retrocedido en los últimos años, lo que genera que muchas de las tareas que la sociedad delega a las autoridades educativas, escuelas y docentes carezcan de los recursos necesarios para cumplir con la misión que les ha sido encomendada. Probablemente este objetivo requiere de la construcción de un pacto social que ponga en el centro de las prioridades de la agenda pública el rol que la educación tiene en Ecuador. Dicho pacto debería poner en el centro de sus preocupaciones no solo el acceso universal de todos los niños, niñas y jóvenes ecuatorianos a la escuela, sino que también los aprendizajes que logran desarrollar durante su proceso escolar. Ello requiere asegurar las condiciones de bienestar necesarias, de estudiantes, docentes y comunidades educativas, para que dicha promesa pueda ser efectiva.

Ahora bien, mayores niveles de financiamiento del sistema educativo por sí solos difícilmente lograrán cumplir con las metas propuestas. Así, los esfuerzos presupuestarios deberían responder al propósito de dotar a las escuelas de mayores capacidades y recursos para el mejoramiento pedagógico. Se requiere entonces avanzar en nuevas formas de relación entre los actores del sistema educativo, de modo que la escuela se convierta en un espacio de inclusión y aprendizaje. Para ello, resulta prioritario *alinear las estructuras de gestión central y local hacia el mejoramiento pedagógico de las escuelas*. Esto implica no solo fortalecer la gestión de las escuelas y la dotación de recursos humanos, técnicos y financieros, con miras a mejorar los procesos de aprendizaje, sino que además y, por sobre todo, alinear los diversos actores públicos de la cadena de gestión, los Gobiernos Autónomos Descentralizados y la sociedad civil hacia el mejoramiento educativo. Ello implica re-balancear las tendencias hacia el cumplimiento de tareas burocráticas, permitiendo dar mayor espacio al acompañamiento y mejoramiento de la gestión escolar.

Los procesos de gestión no solo deben buscar fortalecer capacidades de la escuela como institución o como centro de inclusión y aprendizaje, sino que deben asegurar que tanto directivos como docentes tengan oportunidades de fortalecimiento de sus habilidades directivas o pedagógicas. En este sentido, es prioritario *fortalecer los sistemas de apoyo y acompañamiento al trabajo de directivos y docentes*, de manera que ambos actores dispongan de sistemas que garanticen su desarrollo profesional y el reconocimiento social de su función. Oportunidades efectivas de formación continua; implementación de estímulos que tengan incidencia en su carrera profesional; mejoramiento de su gestión pedagógica mediante la incorporación de prácticas efectivas como la colaboración entre pares, la reflexión, la indagación o el trabajo en red, entre otros, sobre todo en contextos vulnerables y rurales, parecen ser mecanismos adecuados para mejoras sostenidas de su desempeño profesional.

Por último, este diagnóstico ha permitido identificar una necesidad imperiosa del sistema educativo ecuatoriano que dice relación con balancear de manera virtuosa las expectativas de desempeño esperado, contenidas en los estándares nacionales o en currículum a nivel nacional, con la demanda de dar mayor contextualización a los procesos de enseñanza. Esta necesidad se expresa en áreas de diverso tipo; sea en el campo de contextualización curricular, permitiendo facilitar de manera sistemática espacios para que los docentes puedan realizar adaptaciones curriculares a las necesidades del contexto; sea en el campo de la evaluación, que tiende a privilegiar los estándares curriculares nacionales dejando de lado la dimensión contextual y de adaptación local. En esta misma línea se requiere reforzar las capacidades pedagógicas del sector de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe y la Etnoeducación a nivel local con espacios de mayor incidencia en los procesos de toma de decisiones a nivel nacional. Resulta prioritario entonces repensar los modos en que las decisiones centrales y nacionales dan cabida al reconocimiento y a las particularidades de los contextos locales.

Desde una perspectiva sistémica, la mejora sostenida de los aprendizajes basada en estructuras de apoyo a las escuelas deberá alinear al menos cuatro áreas del sistema educativo: *sistemas de evaluación* integrales de estudiantes, docentes y directivos⁵; desarrollo de *planes de formación y mejora* alineados a las necesidades específicas de dichos actores; *sistemas de apoyo y acompañamiento pedagógico* que permitan materializar los procesos de mejora; y asegurar los *recursos técnicos y financieros* para garantizar de forma efectiva que el sistema y la relación de los actores se alineen al aprendizaje.

5 Esta mirada permitiría fortalecer el Sistema de Información y Gestión Educativa (SIGED) de manera que se desarrolle una cultura de generación, registro y uso de información por parte de los diversos actores del sistema educativo. Ello podría mejorar la toma de decisiones, el monitoreo de las estrategias implementadas y el análisis de la calidad de la inversión en el sistema educativo, según su impacto en los resultados de aprendizaje.

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Laboratorio de Investigación e
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América Latina y el Caribe



Example materials from the final report phase

Final report by the **SUMMA** team from their diagnostic pilot in **Ecuador**

**Misalignments in the Ecuadorian education system:
How do the system align its actors and public efforts
towards learning improvement?**

SUMMA

November 2022

Research Team

This research was carried out by SUMMA (Laboratory for Research and Innovation in Education for Latin America and the Caribbean). The research team consisted of the following people:

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1. Introduction

In recent decades, Ecuador has made progress in political, social, and economic transformations. This is manifested in its significant advancement in various indicators of well-being, which does not contradict the existence of important gaps and challenges to be addressed by the country. The factors behind this progress are related to the new constitution of 2008 which has undoubtedly meant the promotion of social rights and the recognition of indigenous peoples and their culture to make Ecuador a society more inclusive, equitable and democratic.

The right to education has been especially prioritized on government agendas, especially in the 2008 constitution, which mandates the State to allocate 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), to expand access and improve the quality of learning. At the same time, the organization of the State and its administrative levels (national, zonal, district) have been reformed to achieve greater deconcentration. Various programmes to improve teachers' careers from their initial and continuous training, accompanied by better and more transparent teacher selection and appointment processes, as well as better salary conditions, have sought to strengthen the teaching profession and their pedagogical capacities. The national curriculum has also been updated to be more flexible, and the educational evaluation system carried out by INEVAL (National Institute for Evaluation) has been consolidated. On the other hand, investments have been made in infrastructure and equipment for schools. Also, the recognition of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities and the valuing of their culture has led to the promotion of intercultural bilingual education across the country.

Despite these and other efforts, and the progress achieved in increasing access and school enrolment (especially in secondary school), the quality of education continues to be an urgent and major challenge, due to the low results achieved and the deep social gaps they denote.

In view of this situation, this first exploratory study aims to identify the main critical knots and inconsistencies nested in the Ecuadorian education system, which inhibit and limit its capacity to transform these efforts, resources, and reforms into better learning outcomes for all students in Ecuador. To do so, it uses an innovative methodology, developed by the RISE (Research on Improving Systems of Education) programme based on a Systems Thinking perspective. This approach makes it possible to analyse the actors, their incentives, and interactions to assess the alignments of them that might prevent the system from aligning towards learning improvement.

This research is based mainly on qualitative methods and information collected in the field through interviews, focus groups and surveys held in the first semester of 2022 in three cities in Ecuador: Quito, Tena, and Guayaquil. In total, more than 50 stakeholders from different regions and levels of the education system actively participated in the identification and discussion of the inconsistencies and critical issues described in this study.

It is hoped that this exploratory exercise will serve as a starting point for new conversations and debates, from a systemic perspective, to address old and persistent problems in the Ecuadorian educational system. Furthermore, this diagnostic study allows us to visualize a rich research agenda focused on the relationships of the actors in the Ecuadorian system, how these relationships are structured, how they have evolved historically, or what effect these relationships and alignments have on the results and performance of the educational system.

The report has five sections that offers a detailed account of the implementation of the RISE diagnostic framework in the Ecuadorian educational system. In addition to this introduction, the second part summarizes the conceptual approach developed by RISE. The third section details the methodology used in the study. The fourth section presents a brief description of the Ecuadorian system, especially for readers and researchers from other latitudes. The fifth section describes the main alignments of the Ecuadorian system and exposes its misalignments in terms of the relationships between actors, influenced by mandates, resources and incentives. Finally, the main recommendations that emerge from the analysis of the data and the rich discussions held by the Advisory Committee.

2. Conceptual Framework

The Systems Thinking approach for analysing education systems developed by the RISE Programme¹ seeks to identify the lack of alignment and incoherencies in the relationships and incentives of the actors that make up the education system. It also attempts to understand how these incoherencies hinder learning improvement. The identification of these misalignments is meant to allow for guiding and prioritizing reforms to the system.

The RISE model analyses the relationships between the actors from the principal-agent paradigm, in other words, it assesses "responsibility" relationships between an actor, called the "principal", who delegates a task with certain objectives to another actor, called the "agent". According to Silberstein and Spivack (2022: 7): "...the principal-agent relationship is a model used to describe a situation in which one actor (the principal) wants a task to be performed, so he/she delegates to another actor (the agent) to carry it out. The principal sets out what is expected of the agent and how the agent will be rewarded for completing the task(s) the principal sets out, i.e., how the principal will hold the agent accountable. [Thus] the principal equips the agent to perform the task(s) by monitoring and incentivizing the agent's performance."

The principal-agent problem, widely studied in the economic discipline (e.g. Laffont and Martimont, 2002), arises from the fact that the principal does not have complete information or adequate control mechanisms to monitor the effort made by the agent to achieve the objectives entrusted to him. Moreover, the achievement of objectives depends not only on the agent's

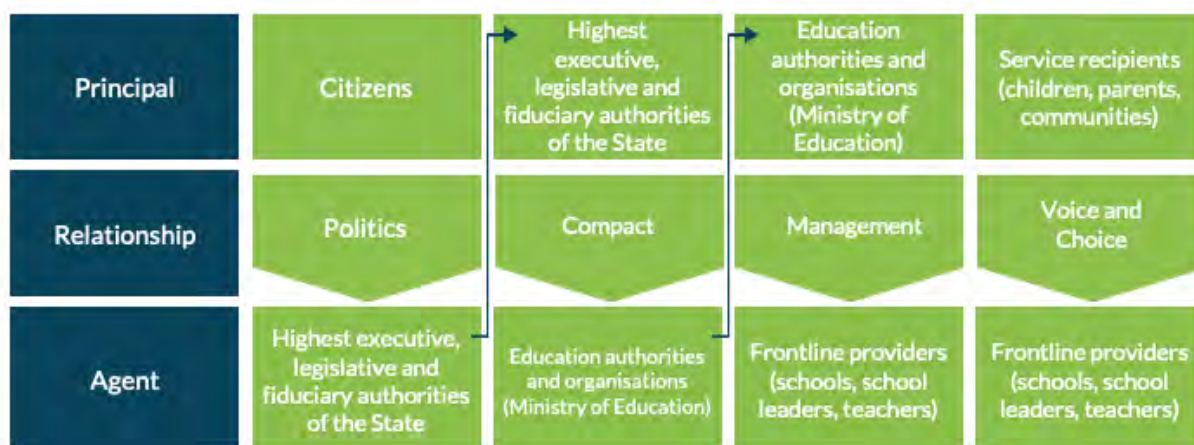
¹ <https://riseprogrammeme.org/tools/rise-system-diagnostic>

effort, but also on other unobservable contextual variables that are often beyond the control of both the agent and the principal. Therefore, when the achievements attained by the agent are lower than those initially agreed with the principal, the question arises as to whether the cause of the poorer performance is to be found in the agent's insufficient effort or in contextual variables not controlled by the agent. In turn, the question may also arise as to whether the support and resources provided by the principal to the agent are adequate and sufficient to accomplish the task. However, taking into account its limitations, the added value of this approach is to focus on the coherence relations between two actors: putting attention to the guidelines given by the principal and received by the agent; the incentives that the agent has to make an effort and carry out the assigned task; the support given by the principal to the agent to achieve the objectives; and the information used by the principal to adequately and fully evaluate the results obtained by the agent.

Taking these concepts to the education context, we can think that the ministry of education (acting as principal) delegates to the schools and teachers (agent) that children and teenagers reach certain learning outcomes. In case these are not achieved under this model, it is difficult for the ministry to know exactly what proportion of lower performance is due, for example, to a lack of effort on the part of the schools or how much the socioeconomic vulnerability of the school community affects that performance. The ministry will also not be able to know whether the cause is due to the lack of suitability of the agent, and his or her abilities to carry out the educational action adequately, or other uncontrolled aspects. For these reasons, and as a starting point, this model seeks to inquire about the alignment of the shared objectives and incentives of the principal and agent. If these are not aligned, even if the other factors are in favour, it is unlikely that the agent will achieve the desired objectives.

From the principal-agent perspective, as shown in Figure 1, the RISE model establishes and analyses four relationships between the actors in the education system to assess their alignment and coherence: (1) Policy relationship (between citizens and high authorities); (2) Compact relationship (between high authorities and sectoral public agencies such as the ministry of education); (3) Management relationship (between the ministry of education and educational agents such as schools and teachers); and (4) Voice and Choice relationship (between parents, proxies, community and educational agents such as schools and teachers).

Figure 1: Four key principal-agent relationships



Source: authors, based on Spivack (2022).

As shown in Table 1, the model specifies five elements or dimensions that characterize each of these relationships: (1) delegation (the principal delegates a task to be executed by the agent); (2) financing (the principal provides monetary resources for the agent's performance); (3) information (the principal evaluates the agent's activities); (4) motivation (the principal provides incentives and encourages the agent); and (5) support (the principal offers assistance and support to the agent for the achievement of his or her task).

Table 1: 4x5 matrix of principal-agent relationships

Relationship	POLITICS Citizens ↓ Highest authorities	COMPACT Highest authorities ↓ Education authorities	MANAGEMENT Educational authorities ↓ Schools, teachers	VOICE AND CHOICE ↓ Service recipients and providers of service
Delegation: What the principal wants the agent to do.				
Finance: The resources the principal has allocated to the agent to achieve assigned task.				
Information: how the principal assesses the agent's performance.				
Support: Preparation and assistance that the principal provides to the agent to complete the task.				
Motivation: How the principal motivates the agent, including the ways in which agent's welfare is contingent on their performance against objectives.				

Source: authors, based on Spivack (2022).

From a systemic perspective, the aim is to reveal the type of alignment that predominates in a relationship. In this sense, it helps to identify the orientation of the actors towards the type of ends they pursue in their activities. Therefore, it observes the degree of consensus and

coherence in the goals of the different actors that make up a relationship. Desirable alignments, from this perspective, are those that favour learning, i.e., that articulate actions where students develop relevant competencies, attitudes, skills, and knowledge. Also relevant, in certain stages of system development, is the alignment to access, which focuses on the expansion of enrolment and the capacity of systems to integrate the greatest number of students.

On the other hand, there may be other alignments that are detrimental to promoting learning, and therefore a quality, inclusive and equitable education. Alignment to selection may end up segmenting and stratifying the system, placing too much emphasis on the academic performance of students, or opening better possibilities only to those with better school results, making invisible the fact that this may be the result of underlying variables linked to social inequalities. In turn, among the undesirable alignments is the alignment to clientelism, which seeks the defence of specific short-term personal or corporate interests (generally other than those related to learning). Furthermore, an alignment of the system towards process compliance can also be observed. This puts the focus on bureaucratic and logistical tasks, administrative activities, and the fulfilment of reports, losing the focus on the substantive tasks of educational actors, which is the improvement of learning.

The following part of report shows the results of the application, adapted and contextualized, of the systems thinking methodology developed by RISE to understand the problems and critical issues of the Ecuadorian educational system.

3. Methodology

This research makes use of qualitative and participatory methods of social research. In addition, it uses secondary information, but mainly it relies on primary sources obtained from field work carried out in different regions of Ecuador during the first semester of 2022.

The methodology and stages of the study are consistent with the methodological suggestions proposed by RISE (Silberstein and Spivack, 2022), to ensure reliability and comparability of the results with studies conducted in other countries. Specifically, the process of implementing this diagnosis was developed in four phases, which are described below.

The first phase systematized secondary documentation and existing information to preliminary understand the accountability relationships in the Ecuadorian education system. An Advisory Committee, made up of fourteen education experts (including the Minister of Education of Ecuador), was formed to provide guidance and feedback on the design and implementation of this project.

In the second phase, primary information was collected through three focus groups in three cities in the country: Quito (Andean Region), Guayaquil (Pacific Coast Region) and Tena (Amazon Region). Forty-seven representatives from different areas and levels of the education system participated to deepen the analysis and understanding of each of the relationships of responsibility between principals and agents of the education system. All focus groups were recorded with the consent of the participants and then the material collected was analysed under the systematization matrices proposed by RISE and adapted by the research group. This process was the basis for identifying inconsistencies, misalignments, and the respective recommendations to address the issues identified.

During the third phase, individual interviews were conducted with some members of the educational community to seek additional information to deepen the diagnosis, in relation to topics such as: financing, educational management, support for school directors, multigrade-rural teachers and the system support for teachers.

In the fourth phase, a prioritization exercise was carried out, developed in conjunction with the project's Advisory Committee, to select the main misalignments and possible solutions.

4. The Ecuadorian education system and its main challenges

Ecuador's education system is regulated by the 2008 Constitution of the Republic and the 2008 Organic Law of Intercultural Education. This law establishes that citizens can access to free, quality education as a right that includes all educational levels, from early childhood education to higher education (Ministry of Education, 2021). The budget allocated to education reaches 3.98% of GDP by 2021, which represents 13.3% of the general state budget (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2022).

The National Education System contemplates both regular schooling and extraordinary education. The school-based modality is coordinated by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education, while the non-school-based education is under the responsibility of the Undersecretariat of Professional Qualifications of the Ministry of Labour. The educational system also ensures space for Intercultural Bilingual Education and Ethno-education, which has as a challenge the preservation of knowledge and ancestral languages. There are two school calendars in the country: the Costa-Galapagos calendar, which starts its academic cycle between April-May, and the Sierra-Amazon calendar, which starts in September.

Within the legal framework instituted between 2008 and 2012, the Ministry of Education adopted a new organic statute of organizational management by processes, and reorganized the Ecuadorian education system into nine zones, 140 districts and 1,142 educational circuits, through a new deconcentrated management model (Ministry of Education, 2012). A major

challenge remains the strengthening of school autonomy and the empowerment of school leaders, with relevant training, so that they develop pedagogical leadership and create a learning environment based on collaboration with focus on learning improvement.

School education (pre-primary, primary and secondary) is divided into public education (fiscal and municipal), fiscomisional (private education subsidized by the State) and private education. It provides education to more than 4.3 million students, distributed among public education, which reaches 78% of the enrolment; private education with 16% and fiscal-commissioned education, which attends to 6% of the students. Out of the total student population, 76% is educated in urban areas and 26% in rural areas. More than 203,000 teachers provide education in the Ecuadorian educational system, with 72% women and 18% men distributed in more than 16,000 educational institutions.

Despite Ecuador's progress in terms of access, there are still important challenges in terms of quality and equity in learning. According to UNESCO statistics, during the last decade (2012-2020) pre-primary education enrolment has remained constant, going from 52% to 54% with increases and decreases during the period. Primary education has maintained its enrolment at around 92%, which accounts for the existence of a group of children (8%) that the system has not managed to integrate into the system. In secondary education, on the other hand, significant progress has been made, going from 75% in 2012 to 86% in 2020 in net enrolment. Despite this progress, a significant number of young people need to be integrated into the system in order to complete secondary education.

The system's challenges are mainly related to education quality. Despite of Ecuador experimenting a significant improvement in learning outcomes between 2006-2013 (Ross-Schneider, et al., 2018), the results of the system have remained steady since 2013 according to the ERCE 2019 - Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (UNESCO, 2022). This means, for example, that a comparatively high percentage of learning poverty persists in relation to the region. Ecuador ranks above the regional average with 63% of students failing to comprehend simple text at age 10 (World Bank, 2019). In mathematics, according to PISA, 71% of students present low performance, which when analysed by socioeconomic level reveals that almost 90% of the poorest students do not achieve the expected learning, compared to 51% of non-poor students (Bos, et. al., 2019).

At the level of educational investment, Ecuador has reduced investment compared to other sectors of public spending. According to the UNESCO, in 2013 public spending on education reached 5% of GDP, a value that decreases significantly by 2021 with 3.9%. Annual public spending per primary education student in Ecuador reaches US\$ 1,195 (PPP\$), a value significantly lower, for example, than Chile (US\$ 4,571), Costa Rica (US\$ 4,365) and the OECD average, which reaches US\$ 10,500 (UNESCO-UIS, 2022; OECD, 2021). As the IDB points out, Ecuador is a country with a low investment per student (US\$14,011 adding primary and secondary spending - between 6 and 15 years), compared to countries such as Costa Rica (US\$

46,531) and Chile (US\$ 40,607) that invest up to three times more than Ecuador. Even lower in relation to the average reported by OECD countries (US\$90,294) (Bos, et. al., 2019).

To this structural reality must be added, at present, the challenges of learning recovery generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges refer to the need to close the learning gap between different socioeconomic groups, reduce school dropout and improve the social and emotional well-being of educational communities (Ministry of Education, 2021). In this context, the question arises as to how it is possible to advance in the improvement of educational quality and to reduce learning gaps.

5. Analysis of the Ecuadorian education system using the RISE approach: Results on alignments and misalignments

5.1 Macro system alignments: a disoriented system

During the fieldwork carried out in the different regions in the country, a survey was administered to the participants of each focus group. In total, forty-seven respondents from different levels of the educational system contributed with their opinions. The main results obtained from the analysis of the surveys are presented below, as shown in Figure 2.

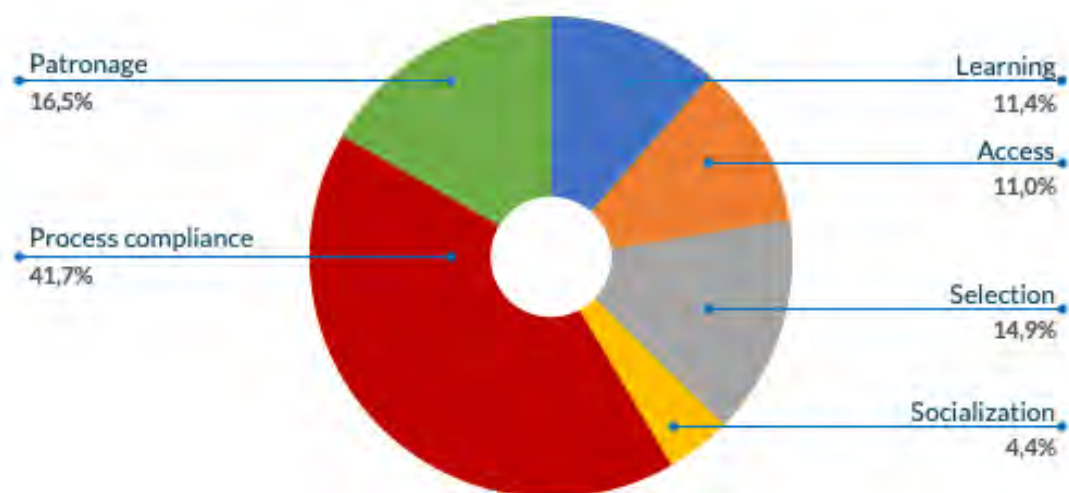
According to the participants in this study, the Ecuadorian system is primarily aligned with compliance with formal processes and administrative tasks. In fact, 41.7% of the participants highlight this characteristic. According to the RISE framework, "process compliance" refers to alignment focused on completing support tasks, compliance with bureaucratic tasks and compliance with administrative processes in human resources, finance, ICT, among others (Spivack, 2021). In this approach, compliance with formalities and procedural rules is prioritized over the substantive and quality objectives that such tasks seek to ensure.

In the Ecuadorian case, and according to the study participants, although the 2008 Constitution and subsequent laws establish that the actors in the education system (principals and agents) must be aligned with learning, the various bureaucratic control mechanisms installed in the system reinforce (de facto) an approach of isomorphic mimicry².

Figure 2: General alignment of the educational system³.

² Isomorphic mimicry is a process through which systems adopt the external form of more capable organizations, but without necessarily genuinely developing the respective internal capabilities (Spivack, 2022: 13).

³ This figure represents a general overview of the alignment of the system. Methodologically, these percentages come from a survey applied to 47 respondents assessing the relationships of compact, management and voice & choice. The participants had the possibility to express their views, selecting what type of alignment (one or none of the six in the graph) characterizes each one of the relationships and its elements.



Source: Authors, based on survey results.

Under this paradigm, the formal and procedural prevails over the purposes that such procedures are intended to serve. Although various actors state that this logic was designed and promoted with the purpose of increasing control and supervision over the actors, avoiding corruption and misuse of public resources, in practice it tends to immobilize the agents and limit the effectiveness in achieving higher levels of educational quality, since every action or decision is scrutinized by higher levels and penalized in case it does not agree with the criteria, not always clear, of the regulations or authorities in power. Consequently, distrust and fear of the legal implications of not following established procedures predominate. Therefore, this alignment is based on accounting for the management of resources with the respective reports of the Comptroller General of the State and its possible observations, rather than on accountability for educational achievements and results.

This approach is not only detected by stakeholders nationally, but also regionally, at district and local levels. According to the participants, district authorities and school principals maintain a predominantly administrative approach aligned with process compliance, preventing teachers from aligning themselves with the learning outcomes of their students. In effect, the overload generated by the various reports and reports they must produce prevents them from having the necessary time to adequately plan their classes, improve their pedagogical practices and provide feedback to their students.

Second, stakeholders highlight an alignment consistent with a "clientelist" approach (16.5%). This alignment is "characterized by seeking short-term political objectives, [where] the education system is used as a tool for clientelism" (Spivack, 2021: 10). Instead of focusing on the pursuit of learning, this alignment generates a tacit and vicious coordination of agents, in favour of their particular interests, using the system's resources inefficiently and ineffectively. According to the study participants, in the Ecuadorian case, a high degree of clientelism is observed, especially in

the management of teacher professional development; in particular, in the assignment of teachers and in the selection of educational authorities (e.g., school or district director). In many cases, political profiles are selected to the detriment of adequate professional profiles, affecting the quality of learning and teacher motivation.

In third place, the feature of "selectivity" (14.9%) stands out, understood as an alignment that promotes a logic of segmentation within the system, classifying students into schools and/or educational levels, according to their academic performance, which is inevitably also associated with ethnicity or socioeconomic origin. In the Ecuadorian case, high-level officials from the Ministry of Education and experts expressed that the alignment towards selectivity is manifested in the disproportionate emphasis placed on flagship schools, despite serving a reduced proportion of students in the system.

Only in fourth and fifth place, 11.4% and 11% of respondents, respectively, stated that the actors and activities of the system are aimed towards achieving the objectives of "learning" and "access". Both should be the main aim of the education system, understanding that, without ensuring universal access, it is not possible to build a quality system for all. In turn, access does not ensure meaningful learning for life in society.

In the Ecuadorian case, although the participants expressed their desire and motivation to align with learning, they claim that the system does not provide sufficient economic resources, nor does it have adequate funding mechanisms or relevant and contextualized pedagogical support to promote this alignment. In turn, and despite the important efforts to present information through the Open Data portal, the Ministry of Education still does not have a sufficiently consolidated Educational Management Information System (SIGED), with digitized and articulated data, which provides permanent information on the responsibilities in the achievement of educational objectives and results, optimizing administrative work and facilitating the analysis of the effectiveness of public policies.

In conclusion, the analysis of the results reveals that there is a dominant perception that the actors in the system are aligned towards the fulfilment of bureaucratic processes. These results also show that there is a multiplicity of objectives in the system. These can lead the different actors to perform divergent and contradictory actions, which divert them from the fundamental objective of "learning", as occurs when some agents are aligned with clientelist and selective objectives. In this sense, the need to align the vision of the system towards a common objective, which channels and mobilizes collective efforts, seems key.

5.2 Inconsistencies regarding learning: critical issues in the principal-agent relationships in the educational system.

This section identifies and discusses the main inconsistencies in the Ecuadorian education system, based on the application of the RISE framework and the information gathered in the interviews, surveys and focus group discussions.

For each of the identified inconsistencies, the problem and inconsistency are described, and concrete examples are presented to support the critical node with evidence. Although the different relationships in the RISE framework are considered, the focus of this section is mainly on the "Management" relationship, which describes the relationship between the Ministry of Education (Principal) and the schools, head teachers (principals), and teachers (agents). The other relationships in the RISE framework, especially the Compact and Voice and Choice relationships, are included based on the negative impact they may have on the management relationship.

5.2.1 Funding inconsistencies: challenges in Compact and Management relationships.

a) Public spending on education: De jure vs de facto.

The 2008 constitutional reform established that Ecuador must annually increase public spending on education by 0.5% of GDP, until reaching a minimum expenditure of 6% of GDP. While there was a historic increase reaching a maximum of 5.3% in 2014, by 2021 the budget had decreased to 3.98% of GDP (Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2022). This shows the inconsistency at the level of the compact relationship between what is declared in the constitution (de jure) and what the country and its highest authorities actually allocate to the education sector, decreasing (de facto) the resources available to the Ministry of Education to achieve its objectives.

b) Contradictions and conflicts between principals.

There are inconsistencies at the funding level in the compact relationship. These are observed when two top national authorities (both acting as principal), request contradictory actions from the Ministry of Education (as agent), involving national budget items. For example, in 2020 the National Assembly approved a salary increase for teachers, equivalent to an increase in the budget of 22%, which implied expanding the government's fiscal deficit by over US\$ 6 billion (Gómez, 2021). This increase obliged the Ministry of Education to make salary adjustments when the Ministry of Finance did not have the provisions in the national budget to allocate these resources to education. Given this contradiction, the intervention of a third actor, such as the Constitutional Court, was necessary to impose the modification of the budget line to comply with the salary increase and the allocation of resources to the Ministry of Education on the Ministry of Finance. According to those interviewed, this type of situation is not exceptional.

5.2.2. Inconsistencies between the mandate received by schools from the ministry that commits them to delivering quality education and the insufficient support and resources for continuous pedagogical improvement in schools.

c) Inconsistency between the demand for quality and the lack of autonomy of schools, in a context of deconcentration.

Decision-making is centralized in the ministerial bodies (principal), despite having a management system that declares and seeks deconcentration, so that schools (agents) do not have autonomy over how resources are invested to achieve educational goals. Indeed, the budget execution of the Ministry of Education was restructured with the 2010 legal reform and the 2011 process-based organic statute, giving way to a model of deconcentration of budget execution. Under this new scheme, each of the country's nine territorial zones carries out the budget assigned to it by the central office. These zones, in turn, pass on the mission to the district directorates, which manage resources to supply the schools with the inputs and personnel necessary for their operation. The local stakeholders interviewed stated that this allocation often lacks coherence and clear criteria. This budget execution model does not contemplate a specific budget at school level, only at district level.

The objective of this measure was to relieve school administrators of administrative tasks so that they could focus more on pedagogical issues (Modelo de Gestión Educativa, 2012). However, although this reform seeks to promote a greater transfer of decisions from central to local level, in practice it means that schools do not have control over their budget (since it is decided at district level), restricting their autonomy and flexibility to meet their local needs.

The essential difference between the processes of deconcentration and decentralization would be given by "the granting of legal personality, of its own individuality, which would be lacking in the first case and would exist in the second" (Rojas, et. al. 2021: 95). In other words, in deconcentration, the central body continues to exercise hierarchical control over the deconcentrated body (Mora, 2006: 69). This difference is key when rethinking the challenges of decentralization in the Ecuadorian educational system.

d) The resources provided for educational improvement are insufficient.

A historical analysis of the budget execution items shows that, in the current budget, approximately 87% is allocated to salaries for civil servants (teachers and administrative personnel), while only the remaining 13% is allocated to school resources (textbooks, uniforms and school breakfasts) (Ministry of Education, 2022). In other words, there is a much smaller proportion of "free" resources earmarked for pedagogical improvement.

Although the Ministry of Education (the principal in the management relationship) delegates to schools the provision of quality education, it does not provide the financial support necessary for the school to receive advice or cover the implementation of its own pedagogical improvement

plans. In fact, there is no adequate funding to respond to the quality demands coming from the central plant and districts such as: the implementation of the Institutional Educational Project (PEI), the Annual Operational Plan (POA), the Institutional Plan for Educational Continuity (PICE), the pedagogical improvement plans identified by advisors of the Support and Monitoring Plan, or the support required by the Student Counselling Department (DECE). As one participant states, "they ask for management quality from the central plant and districts, while the schools ask for the necessary resources" (principal, Tena workshop, 2022). This tension and incoherence are evident in the discourses of different actors.

This lack of support is particularly serious in schools with greater socio-educational needs and those located in rural areas. In these cases, schools often end up relying on the financial support that families are able to provide, despite their own social vulnerability. For example, parents who participated in the workshops stated that, despite the claim that education is free, schools continually pressure them to make contributions (for continuous improvement, educational materials, maintenance, infrastructure), because the government does not provide sufficient resources to cover these needs.

There is also a problem in the "timeliness" of the transfer of resources for improvement from the central to local level. This is due to the fact that the process of approving requests for district needs, and the respective budget allocation begins at the beginning of each year and reaches the school four or five months later, when the school year is already well underway and needs have increased or have already been met through actions, locally referred to as "self-management". For example, through partnerships with local companies or donations made by families.

5.2.3 Inconsistencies between mandate to provide quality education and insufficient provision of support, autonomy and training to principals and teachers.

e) Weakness in the ministry's systems and technical teams for pedagogical support and supervision at schools.

"How much and how is the school supported? What is really happening is that the school is under pressure from both fronts: the government and society," concludes an academic at a workshop in Guayaquil (2022).

The National Model of Support and Monitoring of Educational Management (MNASGE) was approved in 2013, after the creation of the Mentoring Programme (2010), within the framework of the New Constitution of 2008 and the consequent reorganization of the structure of the State; the New Organic Law of Intercultural Education (LOEI-2011); the General Regulations to the Organic Law of Intercultural Education (2012); and Ministerial Agreement 020-12 in which the Organic Statute of Organizational Management by Processes of the Ministry of Education is found.

The Ministry of Education's support and follow-up model currently has 116 advisors, forty-six educational auditors and 217 teachers who were in training as mentors. Among these, 154 are no longer on the programme and the rest only dedicate 20% of their working day to mentoring in their educational institutions. Therefore, the staff assigned to pedagogical support and follow-up is not able to supply the entire educational system (Mineduc, 2022). In fact, several participants in the study referred to the insufficient pedagogical support received. For example, in Tena it was argued that there were "less than ten mentors to pedagogically support approximately 1,500 schools" (local ministerial authority, Tena 2022 workshop).

This shortage is due to the lack of strengthening of the Mentoring Programme, which aims to provide pedagogical accompaniment in the classroom to teachers in public schools, especially those with low performance in the national evaluation and in rural areas. These mentors should fulfil "a formative role, transmitting their knowledge to classroom teachers through training workshops, observation and feedback on their practice" (Vezub, 2011: 13).

Furthermore, the psychoemotional support system is underfunded and, consequently, the Counselling Department (DECE) has a shortage of professionals for psychological support. This situation has been modified with the recent Law (LOEI reformed, 2021) that seeks to strengthen the axis of quality and student welfare. Therefore, it is a challenge for the executive (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour, and Ministry of Education) to implement the legal provisions.

Finally, the problem of the support and follow-up model lies not only in the insufficient number of pedagogical advisors and related professionals, but also in the confusion regarding their role, which in practice combines elements of oversight of standards, supervision of processes, and pedagogical support. This last role is identified by the study participants as the weakest and least frequent. For example, in the Systematization Report of the Pedagogical Accompaniment Programme in Esmeraldas and Sucumbíos by UNICEF (2019), it is stated that a major weakness is that the district does not have a pedagogical department.

f) Processes of selection, training and remuneration of principals are inadequate to promote school leadership that promotes learning.

The legal framework for Education has an organic statute of organizational management by processes, structured in 1,142 educational circuits, the smallest administrative unit of the system. This design seeks to decentralize ministerial tasks, but without ensuring resources and capacities at school level to guarantee efficiency in the management of pedagogical processes. Therefore, school autonomy and the empowerment of principals continue to be a challenge for strengthening the educational system. As Pavo et al. (2021) point out, "there is a bureaucratic conception of institutional educational plans and coexistence codes, which may be evidence of a lack of leadership in educational institutions".

Although there are quality standards for directors (Ministry of Education, 2017), there are still no formal processes for initial and continuous training. In addition, the position of a head teacher (principal) at a public school can be accessed in different ways: by appointment -through public selection competitions based on merit and opposition-, or by designation -through appointment as head teacher-in-charge- (principal), which has the same workload as the head teacher (principal) with appointment, but without the same salary. Most school head teachers (principals) are teachers appointed to the position. In other words, they are neither trained nor remunerated according to their role and responsibility, which negatively affects their performance and motivation. In fact, only 429 school principals receive a salary equivalent to their functions, while more than 5,000 teachers have managerial functions without managerial remuneration, since due to lack of budget the respective competitions for the selection of managers have not been carried out (Distributivo de Personal, 2022).

Furthermore, interviews with various stakeholders highlight the high levels of politicization in the appointment of authorities at district and school levels, aligning towards process compliance and clientelism, and sometimes deviating from a technical process of selecting principals to ensure and promote learning.

g) Teacher professional development decoupled from the pedagogical needs of classroom work.

The Ecuadorian education system has established that the role of teachers is essential to improve the quality of education. However, the teaching career does not have a formative approach that consolidates disciplinary knowledge and develops effective pedagogical competencies; in practice, it is aimed at administrative matters and to the fulfilment of bureaucratic processes and tasks defined at ministerial level. This becomes particularly relevant if we observe the results of the national evaluation "Ser Maestro", which shows a significant percentage of teachers with a low level of performance, for example, at the level of disciplinary knowledge. In fact, more than 50% of the evaluated population is located between the low and standard ranges (Ministry of Education, 2021). Along the same lines, other studies show that "half of the teachers are anchored in a traditional, transmissive pedagogy... [and possess] a lack of professional experience." (Pavo et al., 2021).

On the other hand, in some cases, various stakeholders state that many teachers construct their identity based on their role within the state bureaucracy to the detriment of their role as teachers who promote student learning. For example, as one of the project's advisory committee members mentioned, "public school teachers tend to see themselves more as public servants than as teachers, where administrative tasks are central to compliance with the system." In line with the alignment towards compliance, which characterizes the management relationship between the Ministry of Education and teachers, one participant points out that "the Mineduc sends orders to the zonal, and the zonal to the district, the latter to the manager, and the latter

to the teacher. It is a great chain. Each one complies. Compliance for the sake of compliance, but there is no feedback" (Director, Tena workshop, 2022).

Although career entry competitions promote job stability and professional development, evidence in Ecuador shows that the average productivity of teachers remains high during the first five to ten years of career, so a system of promotion and incentives and pedagogical support throughout professional life is a first priority need (Ponce and Drouet, 2018). In turn, according to the testimonies of some participants, the most appropriate professional profiles are not always selected in the competitions, so there is the perception that political and customer considerations operate at the local level that end up affecting the possibilities of educational improvement or teachers' motivation.

This entry and promotion system for the teaching career is based on disciplinary knowledge, degrees obtained and years of experience (LOEI, 2021; MINEDUC Ministerial Agreement 2021-00007-A and 2018-00025-A). However, the competencies and skills developed seem to be insufficient to enhance higher levels of effective learning in the classroom. For example, according to one teacher in the focus groups, "teachers do not receive tutoring or support, and have little preparation on special educational needs."

In turn, some teachers state that they do not have enough non-teaching hours to adequately plan their classes, evaluate learning and provide formative feedback to their students. In fact, as a teacher participating in the study pointed out, "the reduction of teaching hours (from 30 to 25) defined by the reform of the Law is not being implemented. Teachers still have an excessive administrative overload" (Teacher, Tena workshop, 2022).

In addition to the above, there is a perception that the teaching career is not socially valued, and that the system does not recognize teachers who achieve good learning results to be promoted (Ex-manager, Tena workshop, 2022). It is key to learn from the experience of permanent Teacher Training programmes with initiatives such as "SiProfe", which had a sustained investment between 2016-2022, with more than US\$ 40,000,000 in investment; or the National Plan for Permanent Training that seeks to strengthen teaching capacities in the medium term (Mineduc, 2022).

It is also a priority to rethink in-service teacher professional development, paying special attention to accompaniment and support processes focused on pedagogical work and teaching practices in the classroom. As pointed out by several ministry officials, teachers currently receive very limited face-to-face training, and the virtual training they receive is asynchronous (i.e., it is online and without tutors to promote reflection and simultaneously accompany the training process).

It should be noted that the Ministry is making efforts in this area, for example, through the creation of the Educational Innovation Laboratory, whose focus is to strengthen teaching practices. It is expected that this initiative will provide information and dissemination of good teaching practices, in order to share them, disseminate them and recognize the efforts of teachers.

5.2.4 Between the standardized and the contextualized: Inconsistencies between national needs and local adaptations.

h) Intercultural Bilingual Education and Ethno-education: national vs. local.

Despite the progress made in increasing the autonomy of the Secretariat of Intercultural Bilingual Education - SIEB (LOEI Reform), difficulties still persist in the management relationship between the ministry and the agencies which oversee the provision of intercultural bilingual education in Ecuador. These difficulties are expressed in decisions that are made centrally without considering the needs of the communities and territories. For example, regarding infrastructure, a teacher in Tena points out that "a typical classroom in the Sierra with small windows of 40cm x 40cm does not work in the Amazon because of the climate, they should be bigger" (Teacher, Tena workshop, 2022). Furthermore, it is frequently mentioned that the feeding guidelines provided by the ministry are designed for a general population but are not contextualized. For example, it is pointed out that indigenous children do not drink cow's milk because they are not used to it and therefore discard it. This is detrimental to the nutrition and daily caloric intake of students and is a waste of resources.

On the other hand, the problem of the lack of mastery by some teachers of the ancestral languages of ethnic minorities is particularly relevant. In Ecuador, there are not enough teachers who speak the native languages, which results in the assignment of non-specialized teachers to teach in indigenous communities. One teacher expresses that providing schools in the Amazon with local teachers "should be a priority...the Spanish-speaking teacher does not understand his/her students and vice versa" (retired teacher, Tena workshop, 2022). In addition, this problem is perceived as a risk for the conservation of ancestral knowledge.

In addition, the curriculum appears as a problematic aspect. Despite the SEIB's efforts to contextualize and adapt the content, there is a perception among many actors in the school system that in reality a national curriculum is implemented with little or no adaptation to the context. This makes schools, teachers and families feel alienated from the learning process. In this line, a teacher points out that "at school we repeat what the central plant says. When faced with any change, the answer is: no, because it is written that way. The regulations say so" (Teacher, Tena workshop, 2022).

The above testimonies contrast with the advances established in the legal regulations. Article 6 of the law (LOEI 2019) establishes that the curriculum will be implemented in the official languages of the various nationalities of Ecuador, respecting a plurinational and intercultural perspective, having to be contextualized according to cultural specificities.

i) Curricular complexities: continuous changes, rigidities, and contextualization.

Despite the delegation coming from the covenant relationship (principal) to promote the contextualization of learning, the curriculum is implemented in the management relationship with standardized guidelines and with little support and training of the teacher (agent) on how to contextualize the contents, especially in rural education with cultural diversity and students with specific needs.

Standardized pedagogical management contradicts the delegation of curricular flexibility and contextualization. In practice, based on the national curriculum, the institution establishes its Institutional Educational Project (PEI) and the Institutional Curriculum Plan (PCI). Despite the monitoring efforts through advisors and educational auditors, and initiatives such as the Learning on Time programme, one teacher states: "teachers do not have the capacity to bring the curriculum down to earth and to adapt it in the context. We have to implement it no matter what. Quality is based on the logic of performance and qualification" (Teacher, Tena workshop, 2022).

On the other hand, the permanent contextualization of the curriculum, this being a slow and complex process, is harmed by the constant curricular changes and adjustments made by the ministry from central level. These are carried out without providing sufficient pedagogical support to directors and teachers to make the adjustments. For example, a union leader expressed his dissatisfaction with the continuous curricular adjustments of the pandemic, with the prioritized emergency curriculum and then the prioritized curriculum with emphasis on competencies (Resolution No. MINEDUC-SFE-2021-00008-R). According to him, "there are two initiatives in less than six months, and when teachers are being trained in one pedagogical initiative, a new one appears" (Leader, Guayaquil workshop, 2022).

Alignment towards learning is hindered because there is a perception that the Ministry of Education often changes guidelines and orientations, which means that schools do not receive information in a timely manner in order to implement changes at local level. According to the interviewees, the Ministry's delegations can be contradictory, repetitive, or untimely when applied across the country (Taller Guayaquil, 2022). In turn, some say that "there are many changes of authority, so there is no consistency with the measures or policies implemented. Each one undoes what the previous one did. There is no continuity, no coherence. Absolute absence of long-term policies" (Taller Tena, 2022).

j) Evaluations: standardize, contextualize, and provide feedback.

There is an inconsistency between the general curriculum guidelines and the national assessments. While the official curriculum designed by the central authorities aims to promote a comprehensive learning process, the standardized assessments developed by INEVAL only cover some disciplines, in other words, a minority part of the national curriculum. This generates incoherence and contradictory signals to teachers, who must decide between teaching the comprehensive curriculum or focusing their efforts on the areas evaluated by INEVAL. This process can lead to an undesirable process known as curricular narrowing.

In addition, INEVAL evaluates teachers in a standardized manner, which inhibits contextualized teaching practice. In this sense, in curriculum management there is a gap between the technical document and classroom teaching practice.

In turn, the evaluation of students and teachers does not generate sufficient information on other dimensions, such as socioemotional skills. This mismatch between what is evaluated and what is taught generates long-term planning problems that affect transparency in evaluation and the use of information (Chiriboga, 2021).

On the other hand, the information generated by the national assessments is not effectively used by the Ministry of Education to provide targeted feedback to schools. Nor is it used to establish scaffolding or recognition strategies to improve the performance of principals, teachers, and students. In this context, an education expert states: "The education system does not monitor the school, and only does so through the results achieved by the student in the standardized tests...it is an incomplete and unidirectional monitoring". That is, standardized summative evaluations are not complemented with formative feedback and meaningful information to support contextualized teaching practice.

For their part, INEVAL officials mention that teaching processes do not always contemplate the curriculum and standards, which makes their evaluation highly complex. In this sense, the use of evaluation information is limited, among other things because evaluations are far from the reality of the classroom, according to stakeholders.

k) Inconsistencies in the role of the family in the learning process: Limited involvement and binding participation of families at schools.

According to Article 2, paragraph "o" of the LOEI, families and communities, as an integral part of civil society, have the full right to participate in school decision-making. However, workshop participants affirm that, in practice, this mandate is not fully complied with, as there is a significant gap between what the norm establishes, and the effective role given to parents and/or representatives in the educational process.

The legal framework promotes citizen participation in educational management (Art.85 and 100, Constitution, 2008.Art. 2, LOEI, 2011). However, in practice, families do not have the relevant information from managers and teachers, nor clear and effective mechanisms for participation in school decision-making. For example, during 2014-2015 a large number of schools that were close to rural and indigenous communities were eliminated. Consequently, some students were forced to travel enormous distances or even drop out of school (Plan V, 2017). This shows the low incidence of families in this type of educational policy decisions.

This scarce participation is also reflected more clearly in the committees of parents and families, whose contribution to decision-making is mainly focused on day-to-day and formal problems, related to the request for voluntary contributions to maintain the infrastructure, organize events, etc. There is usually no focus on substantive problems, such as the quality of education, nor on how to address them collectively and strategically.

The involvement of parents and/or legal representatives is also limited to identifying learning results, which are mostly reflected in grades, and in the possible access of their children to higher education. In other words, families are evaluating school information based on grades and not on learning, as expressed by a teacher: "The important thing for parents is that their children do not fail and that they succeed; that we give them good grades, that's all" (Teacher, Tena workshop, 2022). According to the testimony of some participants, the above translates, in several cases, into apathy and lack of interest on the part of families to participate in the educational process of their children (motivation): "Parents are not interested and have become passive and easy-going. The school requires support from the community, but the system does not motivate them to participate" (Taller Quito, 2022).

6. Conclusion: Prioritized Recommendations

According to the information analysed and the testimonies of the different actors in the education system, there is a tendency in various areas to establish relationships in which a logic of compliance with bureaucratic and administrative processes predominates. Although the value of a system that seeks to operate with common and clear administrative parameters is recognized, there is still a risk that the actors lose sight of the substantive objective of their work and fail to align themselves to promote the improvement of learning. In this framework, and despite being the dominant alignment, tendencies towards clientelism or selectivity seem to play an equally important role in the type of incoherencies that characterize the Ecuadorian education system.

Based on this general diagnosis, this exploratory research has made possible to identify several priority areas for reform to make progress in improving learning. Specifically, four types of

actions emerge as priorities⁴: (1) materializing the promise of financing to effectively provide the educational system with greater resources and consistency among the tasks and responsibilities delegated to the ministry of education by the high-level authorities; (2) aligning central and local management structures towards pedagogical improvement of schools; (3) strengthening support and accompaniment systems for the work of principals and teachers; and (4) balancing in a virtuous way the expectations of desirable learning, contained in the national curriculum, with the demand for greater contextualization of teaching processes at the local level.

It is a priority to increase the level of financing of the educational system, aiming at the level that the country itself has defined at around 6% of GDP. Public spending on education, expressed as a percentage of GDP, has fallen in recent years, which means that many of the tasks that society delegates to educational authorities, schools and teachers lack the necessary resources to fulfil the mission entrusted to them. This objective probably requires the construction of a social pact that places the role of education in Ecuador at the centre of the priorities on the public agenda. Such a pact should place at the centre of its concerns not only the universal access of all Ecuadorian children and young people to school, but also the learning that they manage to develop during their schooling process. This requires ensuring the necessary welfare conditions for students, teachers, and educational communities, so that this promise can be effective.

However, higher levels of funding for the education system alone are unlikely to achieve the proposed goals. Thus, budgetary efforts should respond to the purpose of providing schools with greater capacities and resources for pedagogical improvement. It is therefore necessary to advance in new forms of relationships among the actors of the educational system, so that the school becomes a space for inclusion and learning. To this end, it is a priority to align central and local management structures towards the pedagogical improvement of schools. This implies not only strengthening school management and the provision of human, technical and financial resources, with a view to improving learning, but also, and above all, aligning the various public actors in the management chain, the Decentralized Autonomous Governments and civil society towards educational improvement. This implies rebalancing the tendencies towards the fulfilment of bureaucratic tasks, allowing for more space for the support and improvement of school leadership.

Management processes should not only seek to strengthen the capacities of the school as an institution for inclusion and learning but should also ensure that both school leaders and teachers have opportunities to strengthen their managerial or pedagogical skills. In this sense, it is a priority to strengthen the support and accompaniment systems for the work of principals and teachers, so that both actors have supporting structures that guarantee their professional development and the social recognition of their function. Effective opportunities for continuous training; implementation of incentives that have an impact on their professional careers;

⁴ The recommendations developed in this section come mostly from the inconsistency prioritization workshop that took place in June 2022. The project's Advisory Committee was asked to identify priority inconsistencies based on their perceived impact on learning improvement.

improvement of their pedagogical leadership through the incorporation of effective practices such as collaboration among peers, reflection, inquiry, or networking, among others, especially in vulnerable and rural contexts, seem to be adequate mechanisms for sustained improvements in their professional performance.

Finally, this diagnosis has made it possible to identify an imperative need of the education system, which is related to a virtuous balance between the expected performance, contained in national standards or in the national curriculum, and the demand for greater contextualization of teaching processes at local levels. This need is expressed in different areas; either in the field of curricular contextualization, allowing us to systematically facilitate spaces for teachers to make curricular adaptations to the needs of the context; or in the field of evaluation, which tends to privilege national curricular standards, leaving aside the contextual dimension and local adaptation. Along the same lines, it is necessary to reinforce the pedagogical capacities of the Intercultural Bilingual Education and Ethno-education sector at the local level with spaces for greater incidence in the decision-making processes at the national level. It is therefore a priority to rethink the ways in which central and national decisions make room for the recognition and particularities of local contexts.

From a systemic perspective, sustained learning improvement based on school support should align at least four areas of the education system: comprehensive evaluation systems for students, teachers and school administrators⁵; development of training and improvement plans aligned to the specific needs of these actors; pedagogical support to support learning outcomes; and ensuring technical and financial resources to effectively guarantee that the system and the relationship between the actors are aligned towards learning.

⁵ This approach would make it possible to strengthen the Educational Information and Management System (SIGED) to develop a culture of information generation, recording and use by the various actors in the education system. This could improve decision-making, the monitoring of the strategies implemented and the analysis of the quality of investment in the education system, according to its impact on learning outcomes.

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Each section of the toolkit should be consulted during the indicated phases of the RISE Education Systems Diagnostic.

- 1 Inception
- 2 Desk review
- 3 Stakeholder workshops and interviews
- 4 Analysis
- 5 Prioritisation workshop
- 6 Final report

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