

Message from the Deputy Chairman Planning Commission

Pakistan, amidst myriad challenges of growth, human well being and good governance is blessed with an enormous resource of positive minded people who are determined to help us achieve Vision 2030, which seeks to provide, '...within a generation...a high quality of life and provides equal opportunities to its citizens to reach their true potential'. ASER Pakistan 2010 provides us with baseline markers that will help us move forward to achieve such a vision with enabled capable children and youth, irrespective of the type of school they go to. ASER Pakistan 2010 reaching out to 32 districts is poised to cover all 138 districts by 2012, thus widening the outreach to every corner of the country with a simple principled premise to achieve an outcomes-based learning framework for every child of Pakistan, without discrimination.

The baseline data on learning for grades 2 and 3 in reading and arithmetic respectively is gathered from children aged 6-16 years, across state and non-state providers in rural areas, which renders for citizens a credible benchmark about household preferences for education facilities. ASER Pakistan 2010 also establishes powerfully that for a majority of parents public sector is still the only option and it must be improved systematically, innovatively and swiftly. The good news is that ASER Pakistan will help measure the improvement at the grass roots level for the public each year until 2015. The data renders powerful gender disaggregated scenarios of: public and non-state provision; enrolment and out of school children; mothers' literacy; learning levels; after school tuitions across all providers by grade level; facilities available in all types of schools; grants that reach the schools and, above all attendance level of both students and teachers which impact learning levels.

A citizen led initiative that is spread across East Africa, India and Pakistan is an impressive South South collaboration that must be appropriately reflected in the Global Monitoring Report (GMR) for EFA and also the Human Development Report (HDR), our national economic survey and poverty reduction reports. ASER Pakistan 2010, along with its counterparts in East Africa and India are deeply illustrative of the emerging trends and relationships of state and society seeking collaboration in governance and accountability systems that can be measured for outcomes and accountability. I am sure that ASER Pakistan 2010-2015 will be a promising tool for all of us, meeting us at least half way in collecting systematic evidence for informing our national economic survey, policies, budgets, and performance towards Vision 2030 and MDG's.

I heartily congratulate the South Asia Forum for Education Development(SAFED) for this bold and much needed survey along with its national partners, Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA), the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), Sindh Education Foundation (SEF), Democratic Commission for Human Development (DCHD), Balochistan Boys Scouts Association (BBSA), the Departments of Education Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan. The support to ASER Pakistan 2010 from UNESCO and the Foundation Open Society Institute (FOSI) was an innovative and timely investment. Above all, I salute the 2000 ASER volunteers, our committed citizens who reached out to 54,062 children of Pakistan.

Dr. Nadeem ul Haque

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