

DARE-RC Research Overview				
S. No	Name of Study	Relevant Thematic Area	Geographical Scope	Study Overview
1	Increasing Middle School Enrolment for Girls: Testing the Targeted Solutions in Locations with Unrestricted Middle-School Access	Improving drivers of learning for marginalised children	Punjab	This mixed-methods research study aims to empirically unpack the issues of post-primary transition of girls in the Chiniot district of Punjab. The research evaluates the effectiveness of a behaviour-focused pilot intervention involving parents and community members addressing the high dropout rates between class 5 and class 6. It begins with an analysis of administrative data to examine transition variations, followed by the development and implementation of the intervention and concludes with an assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention. This study holds potential as a scalable, cost-effective strategy for resource-constrained settings and can be embedded into existing government outreach programs.
2	Disability Inclusive Data and Systems: Analysis of the Integration of the Washington Group Questions on Disability into the Annual School Census in Pakistan	Effective Data Use	Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad Capital Territory	This sequential mixed method study aims to generate valuable information to support Pakistan in ongoing efforts to introduce strong, standardised data on the presence of children with disabilities into its education system. It examines the integration of four (of six) Washington Group Short Set (WG-SS) questions into Pakistan's 2023/24 Annual School Census (ASC), generating numbers of school children with difficulties seeing, hearing, walking and remembering or concentrating. The insights gained from the study will be crucial in strengthening disability-inclusion efforts in education sector planning, teacher training and monitoring of equitable educational provision.
3	Exploring Lived Educational and Social Experiences of Children from Religious Minority Backgrounds in Pakistan	Improving drivers of learning for marginalised children	Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	This qualitative research with its focus on Pakistani children from religious minorities addresses critical gaps in the understanding of human experience of groups living at the uncomfortable nexus of nationalism and religion. The study aims to get a deeper appreciation of the opportunities, challenges and gaze faced by the children from minority religions traditions, to inform policies that foster inclusive environments.
4	Researching the Effectiveness of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the Education Sector in Pakistan	Improving drivers of learning for marginalised children	Sindh	This mixed methods research investigates the efficacy (equity and cost-effectiveness) of various PPP models of education delivery in comparison to public and private schools within the context of Sindh. The purpose is to examine whether the PPP schools improve access to (enrolment, attendance, and completion) and quality of education (students' academic learning outcomes, and their teachers' teaching practices) in comparison with similar public and private schools.
5	Science and Mathematics Instruction and Learning Outcomes (SMILO) in Pakistan	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad Capital Territory, Gilgit-Baltistan	This research investigates the variation and causes of low student performance and weak pedagogical practices, focusing on teaching effectiveness of science and mathematics in Pakistan. Using a mixed methods approach, the study examines how pedagogical practices mediate relationships between relevant factors and student learning outcomes. The findings can inform teacher capacity development policies and guide federal (NACTE) and provincial teacher training institutions in revising teacher education curricula, supporting evidence-based strategies to improve learning outcomes and advance progress towards SDG-4.

6	Digital Evolution in Teacher Development: Analysis of Punjab's Continuous Professional Development (CPD) System	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Punjab	This mixed-methods study aims to critically examine the evidence gaps, institutional capacity constraints, and the gendered digital divide that shape the flow of information among stakeholders involved in the implementation of Continuous Professional Development (CPD), with particular emphasis on the Classroom Observation Tool (COT) initiative in Punjab since 2021. By exploring how data is generated, shared, and utilised within this context, the study seeks to identify key facilitators and barriers to evidence-informed policymaking and implementation. Ultimately, it will provide actionable insights to strengthen the effectiveness of teacher training programs, enhance pedagogical practices in classrooms, and inform strategic policy and management decisions in the education sector.
7	Classroom, Family and Community-Related Experiences of Children with Disabilities in Mainstream Schools in Pakistan	Improving drivers of learning for marginalised children	Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	This study explores the experiences of children with disabilities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. Primary and junior secondary schools will be chosen and children will be sampled to include those with sensory impairment (vision and hearing), physical impairment, intellectual impairment, learning disability and development disorders. Their experiences of teaching methods and learning materials, physical and social school environments, and the role played by families and communities in children's access to and experiences of education will be investigated. Following analysis, preliminary findings will be shared at validation workshops in each school. The evidence generated will support contextually appropriate strengthening of inclusive educational policy and practice in ways aligned to the expressed needs of children with disabilities and their families.
8	Building Resilience to Climate Vulnerabilities Through Education: Supporting Schools, Educators and Students in Pakistan	Resilient education service delivery	Sindh	This study intends to assess whether girls' education can strengthen climate resilience by educating, preparing and empowering girls. Using rural Sindh as their study sample, the research aims to centre the voices of school leaders and educators to understand whether they have the understanding and the resources needed to deliver education in climate-vulnerable contexts and when faced with climate related disasters. By generating critical evidence on the impact of climate disasters on adolescents and key education stakeholders, the study addresses a national gap on the role of teacher professional development (TPD) in emergencies and contributes to global discourse on education's role in climate resilience, with implications for future policy and programming in Pakistan.
9	Resilient Education System for Adolescent Learners: Inclusive Community-Based Participatory Research in Urban and Rural Settings in Pakistan.	Resilient education service delivery	Punjab, Sindh, Islamabad Capital Territory	This study explores what resilient education means for adolescents (ages 10–19), their teachers, education authorities, and communities in Pakistan. Grounded in community-based participatory research (CBPR), this research gathers rich, context-specific narrative and visual insights on experiences of climate change-induced and man-made disasters and their impact on education continuity, health and wellbeing and how those intersect with the existing challenges to the resilience education system in Pakistan. Through inclusive and action-oriented methods, including interviews, geographical mapping, and photovoice, this research aims to generate locally relevant evidence that can inform more adaptive, inclusive, and resilient educational practices and policies.

10	Climate Change Hazards, Risks, and Vulnerabilities Assessment in Schools in Pakistan: Piloting a Localised Participatory Assessment	Resilient education service delivery	Punjab, Sindh, Islamabad Capital Territory	The study aims at collaboratively contextualizing UNESCO's and Viet Nam Ministry of Education and Training's 'Assessment and preparedness toolkit' into Pakistan's context and will pilot the newly adapted 'Climate Risk School Assessment Tool' for identification and mapping of hazards inside and outside school communities. More broadly, the study will generate empirical evidence on local hazards, risk and vulnerabilities faced by school communities, their capacities and barriers to effective management. The study will provide insights into processes of tool contextualisation, learnings about tool acceptability, feasibility and value, and highlight key considerations for scaling climate risk assessment and response in educational setting in Pakistan.
11	The Teacher e-Transfer Policy in Punjab: A Study of its Impact on Accountability and Education Outcomes	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Punjab	The research explores how Punjab's merit-based, online teacher transfer system—introduced in 2019 to reduce political interference—affects transparency, accountability, and education outcomes. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, the study analyses large administrative datasets in conjunction with field interviews of teachers, head teachers, and officials across selected districts to triangulate statistical trends with on-the-ground experiences. The study intends to provide lessons for other provinces as well as suggest other avenues for improved professional management of public sector teachers.
12	Exploring the Transition to Student Learning Outcomes-Based Curriculum and Assessments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad Capital Territory: Policy Frameworks and Teachers' Implementation Experiences	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad Capital Territory	This study looks at how the SLO reform has been developed, planned, and used in two parts of Pakistan—Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). It follows the journey of the SLO policy from national planning to how teachers experience it in the classroom. By focusing on teachers' voices, this study aims to better understand how national reforms are working in practice. It will help policymakers, curriculum designers, and education officials see where support is most needed—and how to make SLO-based reforms more effective, practical, and relevant for teachers and students alike.
13	The Equity Equation Project: Predictive Modelling of Policy Impact on School Enrolment	Accountable education systems	Punjab	Employing a mixed methods approach, this project seeks to revolutionise education planning in Punjab by combining cutting-edge technology with on-the-ground realities through a high-fidelity computational model. The platform will provide a virtual model of the Pakistani education system, where policymakers can test new policies and see their impact on student access, creating a library of policy outcomes to guide evidence-based decisions. This project conceptualizes and prototypes an agent-based model (ABM) to integrate various data from the most recent census and surveys to simulate the outcomes of proposed policies on educational access.
14	Teacher and Community Perspectives: Missing Links in Language Planning and Policy in Multilingual Settings	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	The study investigates how parents, teachers, and community members experience and perceive current language policies, with a particular focus on the use of mother tongue(s) in education. It seeks to inform policy reform by grounding recommendations in the lived realities of stakeholders at the grassroots level. It examines the school and home languages gap's impact on learning in two districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Sindh provinces. This comparison will provide insights into better integrating mother tongue/most familiar languages into schools. By incorporating perspectives from teachers, parents, and communities, the project ensures its findings are grounded in real-world experiences, crucial for developing effective policy recommendations adaptable and replicable in other regions.

15	Schooling strategies & Climate Change: A Coherence Analysis of Local Policy & community adaptations	Resilient education service delivery	Sindh	The study aims to better understand where climate impact on education is most acute and the extent to which local governments and communities in Sindh are aligned in how they respond. Combining spatial analysis and field-based qualitative research, the study investigates how climate change impacts children's schooling, and how best to mitigate these effects. The study will inform the education sector of relevant disaster response plans and will highlight the challenges and opportunities district governments face in implementing climate policy — including data use in planning, financing climate-adaptive services, and supporting teaching solutions in climate-affected areas.
16	Teacher Learning as a Mediator of Teaching Quality at Primary School in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	The proposed study investigates how teaching quality is shaped by teacher 'learning' (also known as teacher education). Instead of treating 'teaching quality' as just good instruction, the project includes non-teaching aspects of a teacher's professional practice that help teach better, like classroom management or student socio-emotional support. The study shall help address a significant gap in the Global South literature on teacher education through a primary research perspective from Pakistan. Moreover, insights about the perceived and performed effectiveness of teacher 'trainings' in KP will add to what is still a small body of knowledge about how well teacher education reforms are helping cover KP's share in Pakistan's learning crisis.
17	Uneven State Capacity: Exploring the Political Economy of Sub-National Variation in Education Provision	Accountable education systems	Balochistan	This research investigates the political economy drivers of spatial inequalities in education outcomes in Balochistan, with a specific focus on gender outcomes. It employs a political settlement analysis (PSA) framework to examine inter-district and intra-district variations in state capacity for education provision. The study utilizes a multi-level comparative design with a mixed-methods approach in five districts, prioritizing qualitative methods complemented by descriptive statistics and Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis. A process tracing methodology will be employed to unravel the causal mechanisms linking differential education outcomes to nature of political settlement and informal institutions. The research will provide critical insights into the interdependence between education service providers and the broader social context, highlighting how frontline actors, such as teachers, navigate their roles within local power structures and how citizens engage in expressing preferences and holding providers accountable.
18	Scaling Impact: Large-Scale Human Capital Interventions for Low-Income Children in Punjab	Improving drivers of learning for marginalised children	Punjab	The quasi-experimental study aims at investigating a large-scale, multi-pronged Early Childhood Education programme in public schools spread across 11 districts in South Punjab. The intervention included, among other things, providing ECE training to teachers, providing the schools with ECE caregivers, making available material for teaching and learning, and upgrading ECE classrooms. By comparing the effects of the intervention in treatment and control groups, the study will generate data-driven evidence on 'what works' to deliver quality ECE education in a low-income setting. The evaluation has immediate policy relevance, as it will inform the Government of Punjab's decisions on scaling similar interventions across other districts in Punjab.

19	Understanding Ways in Which School Leadership Styles Shape School Cultures and Student Outcomes.	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Punjab, Sindh	The research investigates school leadership practices from the perspectives of the school principals, students and their parents in selected government secondary schools for boys and girls, which have shown to meet markers of ‘good’ schools. Its overarching objectives are to gain contextually rich understanding of leadership styles in Pakistan, and their impact on school cultures and student outcomes. By exploring the leadership practices of school principals of schools which are regarded as ‘good schools’, the study interrogates what makes leadership effective in generating high student outcomes, empowered and effective teachers, and satisfied parents. The research aims to inform policy making towards supporting effective leadership in government schools to highlight what works in the Pakistani contexts.
20	Enhancing Equity and Accountability in Education: Evaluating and Scaling Composite Performance Indices in Pakistan.	Accountable education systems	Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan	This project evaluates and scales composite education indices in Pakistan, focusing on the District Performance Score (DPS), Intra-District Performance Score (IDPS), School Status Index (SSI), School Improvement Framework (SIF), and District Education Performance Index (DEPI). These indices, pivotal for ranking schools and districts, are designed to facilitate data-driven decision-making and equitable resource allocation. In particular, the study evaluates the design, validity, and alignment of these indices with international best practices and identifies barriers to scalability and optimal use through the IDRC Scaling Impact Framework. It further examines how indices integrate gender-sensitive metrics and address gender disparities and propose actionable recommendations to improve the design and utilization of these indices. This project aims to empower education systems with robust tools to improve accountability, equity, and data-driven reforms, transforming governance and outcomes across Pakistan.
21	Using Behavioural Insights into Parental Engagement for Improved Learning Outcomes	Improving drivers of learning for marginalised children	Sindh	This study addresses the gap in understanding how contextually tailored, behaviourally informed parental engagement strategies can improve learning outcomes in low-performing regions like Sindh. Focusing on Sukkur division, it will conduct a behavioural diagnostic to design household-specific interventions and assess their impact on parental engagement and student performance. The study will generate granular, actionable data to inform education strategies, enhance parental agency, and support marginalized groups. Its findings aim to guide provincial education policies in Pakistan and offer scalable insights for other low- and lower-middle-income countries seeking to strengthen parental involvement in education.
22	Exploring Teacher Licensing in Pakistan: Insights from Sindh and Punjab for Scalable Reforms	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Punjab, Sindh	This study investigates the impact, implementation, and systemic challenges of teacher licensing policies in Pakistan, with a focus on primary school teachers in Sindh and Punjab. The research aims to assess the impact of teacher licensing on student learning outcomes, explore stakeholder perceptions, and identify systemic barriers to implementing licensing policies. The mixed-methods approach integrates quantitative analysis of standardized assessment data (PIE NAT 2025) and qualitative insights from stakeholders, providing a comprehensive evaluation of the policy’s feasibility and effectiveness. The findings from this study will inform teacher recruitment and professionalization policies in Pakistan and similar low-resource contexts globally.

23	Breaking the Silence: Improving Educational Access and Technology for Deaf Learners in Pakistan	Improving drivers of learning for marginalised children	Punjab, Sindh, Gilgit-Baltistan	This research aims to enhance communication and learning opportunities for hearing-impaired children across Pakistan by developing a gender-sensitive assistive technology that translates speech into Pakistan Sign Language (PSL). The tool will bridge critical communication gaps and support kindergarten-level education, providing deaf children with essential language skills. By identifying the risk and protective factors influencing access to education, the project will address the barriers faced by hearing-impaired children while exploring the roles of parents, communities, and schools in fostering educational opportunities. The findings will contribute to the development of actionable recommendations for assistive technology design, inclusive education strategies, and policy frameworks.
24	Tracing Child Migrants' Education Access Amidst Climate-Induced Disruptions in Pakistan	Resilient education service delivery	Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	This research investigates the impact of climate-induced disruptive events on the educational access, continuity, and quality for climate-induced child migrants (CCMs) residing in urban and peri-urban Pakistan. Focusing on marginalised areas hosting CCMs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, the study explores systemic challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, enrolment difficulties due to missing/destroyed documentation, and socio-cultural barriers like gender disparities, financial pressures, and ethnoreligious discrimination. The study generates actionable evidence on the effects of disruptive climate events on educational continuity, access and quality of education for CCM, and identifies policy strategies for inclusive and resilient education systems.
25	Can you hear me now?: Experimental Evidence on Improving Education Through Non-Electoral Citizen Participation.	Accountable education systems	Punjab	This project investigates how citizens in rural Punjab, Pakistan, can hold government representatives accountable to improve public schools. Through a randomized control trial, the project introduces community-based mobilization interventions to create accountability channels between citizens and policy actors to improve public schooling in Pakistan. These interventions vary by: (i) policy actor type – whether citizens approach a bureaucrat directly or exert pressure through a political route and (ii) citizen gender – whether the citizens participating are women or men. In addition, for each, the study also includes a variation in which citizens' interaction with the policy actor is more directly supported and facilitated by an NGO. It examines impacts on citizen political awareness and action, policy actor response, and public school/educational outcomes.
26	Review of RTSM System and Exploring its Scalability in Balochistan.	Accountable education systems	Balochistan	This mixed-method study examines the innovative android-based intervention named “Real Time School Monitoring (RTSM) System” introduced in Balochistan as a part of the Education Sector Reforms in 2015. It examines the system’s performance over the last 10 years, assessing its effectiveness, limitations, and potential for scale. The findings will provide actionable insights for enhancing data systems in education governance and strengthening the integration of RTSM into broader provincial and national accountability frameworks.
27	Consequences of Scaling Merit Based Policies for Teacher Recruitment	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	This study adopts a mixed-methods research design to investigate teacher recruitment and training systems in Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), focusing on implementation, effectiveness, equity, and sustainability. The methodology combines quantitative analysis of secondary data with qualitative fieldwork, including key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and district-level case studies.

28	Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) – Researching the Process of Scaling in Sindh	Strengthening the quality of front-line education provision	Sindh	This mixed-methods study investigates the process of scaling TaRL programme in two districts of Sindh by examining the factors that enable or constrain this process. It aims to assess the opportunities to scaling and identify champions who can propel the scaling efforts forward so that the final outcomes are beneficial for students’ learning within Pakistan. Therefore, this study’s findings will be valuable for policy uptake in Pakistan given the suggested alignment of the programme with current government priorities and policies. By interrogating both the technical and political economy dimensions of scale, the study contributes critical evidence on what it takes for pedagogical innovations to move beyond pilot to scale in Pakistan.
29	Afternoon Schools: A study of scalability and potential for scale in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan	Improving drivers of learning for marginalised children	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan	<p>This research examines the afternoon schools across three provinces to understand its differential scaling trajectories and possibilities to scale. Using a mixed-methods design, the study examines the scaling up and potential to scale of education reforms, focusing on both the Double Shift Schools (DSS) initiative in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Afternoon School model in Sindh. In KP, it examines how the reform was scaled, and analyses the mechanisms, policy decisions, and contextual factors that shaped its growth trajectories. In Sindh, the research will examine the factors that have influenced its expansion to date and explore the conditions under which the reform could achieve sustainable scale.</p> <p>This study adopts a systems approach by analysing how resource allocation, alignment with departmental policy and Rules of Business, political buy-in, and administrative feasibility interact to enable or constrain the provincial level scalability and replicability potential of these education reforms. The findings of this study will guide the School Education Departments KP to optimise their processes and improve the efficacy of DSS as well as provide evidence-based insights to the Balochistan and Sindh School Education Departments on introducing and scaling their afternoon schools.</p>