



## Evaluating District Performance for Improved Education Delivery

*In 2017, the District Performance Evaluation System (DPES) was implemented in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province to incentivise district education management based on performance. The FCDO-funded Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*

*Education Sector Program (KESP) assisted the Elementary & Secondary Education Department (E&SED) in designing and implementing the program. The KESP team informed the process by establishing baselines using data from various sources, including the IMU databank and the EMIS database.*

The intervention was designed as a motivational tool to improve the performance of education managers. However, the algorithm for assessing performance was primarily based on static targets. This resulted in lopsided results because underdeveloped districts with lower baseline numbers and lower resource allocation had a disproportionate amount of ground to make up for districts with more developed infrastructures and higher resource allocation. The inherent inequity in DPES performance evaluation was counterproductive and bred resentment among the underdeveloped districts. The KESP team quickly recognised the need for course correction and assisted E&SED in revisiting the DPES. The DPES was renamed District Performance Scorecard (DPS) and the Intra-District Performance Scorecard (IDPS) in 2018. The DPS/IDPS introduced a paradigm shift in the district education management performance evaluation—a transition from a target-based model to a holistic scoring model predicated on performance indicators. The revised model minimised the risk of performance evaluations influenced by extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the district management. Now, every district management team has an equal chance of topping the ranking system. In addition to the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) examination results, the new model factors in key performance indicators—teacher participation in CPD training, performance on monthly assessments in Teacher Induction Programme (TIP), and Assistant Sub Divisional Education Officer (ASDEO) field engagement frequency. The new scoring system also gave appropriate weightage to vital administrative tasks such as district budget utilisation and action resolution generated by the Online Action Management System (OAMS) were given due weightage in the scoring system. “The model emphasises providing equal opportunity to aspirants for the award. The scorecard typifies two

thematic segments—quality and access—each carrying equal weightage with two separate and equal awards for male and female DEOs. The redesigned intervention was launched alongside the District Incentive Programme (DIP)—a biannual cash reward for the seven districts and individuals with the highest DPS scores, enhancing winning opportunities for underdeveloped districts and encouraging high performance on two key education strands. “Finally, we feel we have a level playing field, inspiring us to work even harder. However, it is always more about recognition than rewards; but I don't mind either,” expresses a beaming Nazneen. The intervention has resulted in significant improvements in a variety of key indicators with E&SED, including school attendance (76 in 2017 to 81.9 % in 2018); teacher participation in training sessions (92.8 in 2018 to 96.5% in 2021-22); and grade 5 students' scores in 2017-2018 (English 31 to 41, Maths 24 to 50, and Science 22 to 44%). PTC activation has increased from 51% in 2018 to 95% in 2021 since it was added as a district performance indicator in 2018. Since the inception of E&SED, the utility of DPS/IDPS has been well established. Monthly stocktakes of DEOs' performance are held in Peshawar, corresponding to the DPS. The success of the intervention is evident in the fact that E&SED has expanded the programme to include the newly merged districts of FATA with KESP TA assistance. To increase transparency, the program/me assists E&SED in automating the model using algorithms integrating multiple databanks. This has aided further institutionalisation of a successful intervention by strengthening administrative monitoring of the scorecards through an interactive dashboard.

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