

Global Partners and Public Policy

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Abstract: The policy environment in India has been shaped by a curious intersection of globalization and localization, growing demands and movements for transparency and accountability and a growing intellectual of the bureaucracy and an institutionalization of the research—policy interface. The global partnership for development provides an opportunity to address the economic, social and environmental issues in a coordinated, coherent and collaborative manner. The global partnership can promote a more effective, coherent, representative and accountable system. Government and international arrangements for collective decision making ultimately develop better and feasible public policies.

Keywords: policy environment, globalization, institutionalization.

INTRODUCTION

Governance refers to the interaction between government and other factors of social sphere and the processes of decision making in a complex world. The concept of governance cannot be restricted to the government only but a result of the complex matrix of relationships between the political and administrative structures and the society in the process of decision making, implementation and accountability. The objective of the public policy is always for the betterment of society. Good governance is necessary to ensure that those policies have their desired effect. Public policy is the chief instrument of a politically organized community. Involving non-state actors in the formulation and implementation of public policies has become a major feature of political life in both developed and developing countries. Which emphasize the need for a more consensual way of making policy through dialogue with all key stakeholders? Consequently, non-state actors are becoming increasingly interested in becoming development partners. The benefits of such a deliberative process of policy formulation are numerous and include increased ownership, new public-private partnerships, consolidation of democratisation, and improved sustainability. The concept of governance has evolved with time. Earlier governance was conceptualised by emphasizing the importance and the nature and relationships between the three major domains of governance that is the state, the private sector and the civil society and linking this with sustainable human development. In Schneider's conceptualization, participation and transparency are cited as defining elements of governance, and accountability, empowerment and capacity building are seen as its

building blocks. Governance includes interactions between and among stakeholders and their social, economic and political environments. Governance is not only about managing resources, people or institutions, but also about understanding how relationships among different stakeholders impact their effectiveness and influence the process of development in their countries. Governance recognizes issues of public concern to include a range of activities and concerns that require action and input not only from the state institutions, but also from other non-state actors, including civil society, international institutions and the private sector. Governance focuses on the connections and interactions between and among social, political and economic issues and institutions and on collaboration and dialogue between various actors to achieve good governance and effective public policy.

GLOBAL PARTNERS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Public policies are conditioned by the local and global environment. It is impossible to separate the external environmental factors, as they invariably influence being brought to bear on socio-economic problems of a country by agencies such as the United Nation and its allied agencies (WHO, FAO, UNESCO, UNPFA, ILO, UNEP, UNDP and others), World Bank, International Monetary Fund, European Policy Forum, The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and European Central Bank, etc. is of critical importance in shaping its policies. With a view to carrying out the economic and social mandate, United Nations funds and program have been established which operate under the authority of General Assembly and Economic and Social Council.

The role of the United Nations and its agencies in policy making for the international community is of critical importance in the context of aim and principles of the United Nations. Article 55 of United Nations Charter proclaims:

“With a view to the creation of conditions of stability and wellbeing which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, the United Nations shall promote:

1. Higher standard of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development;
2. Solutions of international economic, social health and related problem, and international cultural and educational cooperation; and
3. Universal respect for and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion” [1].

In 1951 Lasswell argued that policy science should take into account of world trends and forces when considering the context of policy problems. He maintained: “Indeed, one of the major tasks of the policy sciences today is to follow in detail the processes of social invention, diffusion and restriction throughout the globe, for the sake of estimating the significance of specific events” [2]. Writing in 1968, Lasswell also maintained: “As the globe shrinks into interdependence, relying more fully on science and technology, the policy sciences gain significance... interdependence implies that every participant and every item in the social process is affected by the context in which it occurs [3].”

Political system of a country functions with in the world system and not immune to outside pressure and influence. Globalization has gained wide attention and recognition. The implications of the notion of globalization are that policy makers must consider agenda formation and problem definition within a global context. The “policy makers in each country share a policy context formed by the International economic cycle of prosperity, recession, depression and recovery” [4]. In a global context more and more issues will be structured by larger forces outside the nation’s constitutional framework of public policy making. Now international organizations and multinational corporation exercise a great degree of influence and reduce the capacity of national policy maker to frame their agenda. With globalization, there is a greater scope of interaction between a nation and more nations. National policy agenda of developing countries open to developed countries global politics has an added role to play in the determination of national policies, particularly developing nations.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AND GLOBAL PARTNERS

Education is important not only for the full development of one's personality, but also for the sustained growth of the nation. Elementary education in India, therefore, is the foundation on which the development of every citizen and the nation as a whole hinges. Elementary education in India means eight years of schooling from the age of six. The Government has made elementary education compulsory and free. But, the goal of universal elementary education in India has been very difficult to achieve till now. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India's flagship program for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right. SSA is being implemented in partnership with State Governments to cover the entire country and address the needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations. SSA seeks to provide quality elementary education including life skills. SSA has a special focus on girl's education and children with special needs. SSA also seeks to provide computer education to bridge the digital divide [5].

UNICEF is committed to ensuring all children to have success to quality education and complete their schooling. UNICEF works with its partner to improve children’s developmental readiness to start primary school on time, especially for marginalized children. Countries adopting sector wide approaches to development, with UNICEF participating along with other key development partners in policy and planning processes [6]. UNICEF provides key support in collecting and sharing data on children education status, helps establish stronger educational information and management system, and shares good policy making practices and innovations. UNICEF also advocates bold initiatives that can boost enrolments and participation, like abolition of school fee and reducing other costs and devising an essential learning package that can be used in emergency situations [7]. UNICEF provides sustained multi-sectoral support beyond funding. This includes being actively involved in day-to-day decision-making, without being obtrusive or trying to dictate terms, while respecting the vision that a country has set out for its own development and setting cooperation within wider development assistance frameworks. UNICEF supports the Government of India's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to ensure all children have access to quality education and complete a full course of primary schooling.

- Building on existing initiatives and recent successes, the major thrusts of the current GOI-UNICEF elementary education program rest on:

Improving school effectiveness (with emphasis on gender parity) through a holistic and gender sensitive understanding of good quality education and demonstration of a scale able quality package.

- Developing context-specific strategies to reach out to girls, especially from socially disadvantaged groups - urban poor, tribal, scheduled caste, and working children - in order to eliminate gender and social disparity in access as well as achievement.
- Enhancing the research base to ensure effective analysis, action and advocacy at all levels, UNICEF's strategy is built around three inter-linked themes: access, quality and equity in primary education. Addressing the needs of out-of-school children is a short-term, yet critical intervention, to provide those who have missed the proverbial school bus another chance.

Improving quality on the other hand is equally critical - a long-term strategy to significantly reduce the number of out-of-school children as well as to improve overall levels of retention and achievement, success is contingent on strong linkages between families/communities and school. Educational research and analysis is the cementing factor and provides critical inputs for effective planning and implementation. UNICEF works with the Ministry of Human Resource Development, States Governments of identified States, National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and its State counterparts, National Council for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), Non-Government Organizations working with education, Civil Society Organizations and children to ensure that:

1. Policies are developed to ensure greater access to both elementary and secondary education and quality standards, including learning outcomes; and reduction of illiteracy amongst girls, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.
2. Policies and programs are strengthened, with budgets increased and fully utilized to improve access and retention as well as improve quality of education in terms of child friendly school environment and learning outcomes.

The main vehicle for UNICEF action is the partnership with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) the flagship elementary education of Government of India. UNICEF's two critical lines of programmatic action are QUALITY with EQUITY. Higher enrolment rates, and especially those of retention and completion, bear evidence of quality and sustained commitment from Governments and the international community to ensure children's learning, promoting their cognitive, creative and emotional development. Inclusiveness and respect for cultural values and heritage will be attained through

quality schooling, encouraging social commitment, responsibility and open mindedness UNICEF's education programs at the national level as well as with Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, Assam, Jharkhand, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra on quality and inclusion through the Child Friendly Inclusive Schools and Systems.

UNICEF is closely partnering the Government of India in institutionalizing the concept of Child Friendly Inclusive Schools and Systems concept (CFISS) with in the SSA. The Child Friendly inclusive Schools and Systems Concept:

- Is a child-seeking school and actively identifies all excluded children to enroll, retain them in schools and supports their effective learning.
- It is child centered school and support realization of the child full potential, takes care of the whole child – health, nutritional status, well being, safety, before they enter the school and after they leave school. All this is achieved with the involvement of the children, families and the communities.

The concept ensures equality of opportunity for all children, provides education that is free and compulsory, affordable and accessible, does not exclude, discriminate, or stereotype children and responds to diversity -- meets the differing circumstances and needs of children. These key elements are further broken down into actionable points for implementation on the field. UNICEF is now working to include these within the ongoing teacher training schedules [8].

UNESCO is the United Nation's specialized agency for education. UNESCO has worked to improve education worldwide through technical advice, standard setting, innovative projects, capacity building and networking. UNESCO long standing experience in the use of information and communication technologies for education is informing projects on education for a sustainable future. UNESCO provides technical advice on education sector reform and resource management to Government and partners. UNESCO supports national decision-makers in developing solid and relevant education policies and strategies and in managing their effective implementation.

According to the context, this support can come in the form of technical assistance in education policy analysis, the design of education sector development plans and donor mobilization in support of national educational priorities. In other cases, the support can relate to national institutional capacity-building in policy formulation, sector analysis,

educational planning, policy stimulation and dialogue, resource projections, sector management, program monitoring and evaluation, development cooperation and donor coordination [9]. In the biennium (2007-2008), UNESCO New Delhi worked to ensure that EFA is firmly anchored as an integral part of the cluster countries development agenda. It promotes education as a fundamental right; improve the quality of education; and stimulate experimentation, innovation and policy dialogue. UNESCO New Delhi works with national Governments of the cluster and the development partners to achieve universal free primary education and gender equality by 2015 [10].

The World Bank has approved a \$600 million credit to support the country's ongoing Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, a nationwide centrally sponsored education program designed to provide children aged 6 to 14 with quality education. The Second Elementary Education Project aims to improve quality and access to this critical social service. The project also aims to promote equity by enabling hard-to-reach children to attend school, create better learning conditions for all children and provide capacity building and academic support to State and sub-State education structures [11]. With Government's flagship Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) scheme showing encouraging results in expansion of elementary education, the World Bank has come forward with an offer to provide additional funding of USD 500 million for the program. The World Bank has proposed the Government to provide the money as soft loans, to be paid over a period of 35 to 40 years with lesser interest. At present, 99% of the habitations in the country have got a primary school. Under the SSA, 2.7 lakh schools have already been operationalized in the country since 2000-2001. Similarly, about 9.86 lakh teachers have been recruited by March this year [12].

Global partners worked hard to improve education through technical advice, standard setting, innovative projects, capacity building and networking. these agencies facilitate the use of information and communication technologies for education is informing projects on education for a sustainable future. These partners provides technical advice on education sector reform and resource management to Government and partners and supports national decision-makers in developing solid and relevant education policies and strategies and in managing their effective implementation.

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