



## School Community Partnership: Policies and Practices

The current issue of the newsletter focuses on 'School Community Partnership: Policies and Practices'. This issue includes articles written in this context by experts and researchers from various member-institutions, located in China, India, Pakistan, and the Philippines. In addition to the articles, the issue includes a section on important news and events related to these member-institutions.

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The First Article explains how to strengthen interactive school-family-community relationships as part of China's education modernisation. It highlights four

priorities: integrating spaces through digital technology to enable seamless communication; strengthening schools' guiding role while promoting shared responsibilities across families and communities; updating educational concepts to reflect diverse learning environments and support students' holistic and lifelong development. Overall, the article advocates building a modern, integrated education system that deepens collaboration with family and communities, focusing on students' growth.

The Second Article discusses how India's Right to Education Act (2009) and the National Education Policy (2020) make school-community partnerships central to improving access, equity, accountability and learning relevance. The RTE Act mandates participation through School Management Committees, while the NEP broadens roles to include collaborative pedagogy, local curriculum inputs, teacher support, and the use of schools as neighbourhood learning hubs. Effective implementation requires capacity building, clear mandates, modest funding, regular joint reviews and facilitation by local government and civil society.

The Third Article reviews India's progress toward universal school education through initiatives such as Operation Blackboard, DPEP, SSA, and the RTE Act (2009), supported by community engagement through SMCs and local education bodies.

Expanded infrastructure has improved access, yet barriers such as remote locations, gender and social exclusion, language gaps, multi-grade classrooms and weak SMC functioning persist. Samagra Shiksha and NEP 2020 address these through an equity-focused approach, emphasising universal access, FLN, mother-tongue instruction and school complexes. To ensure impact, community participation must be strengthened through training, empowerment, adequate resources, cross-sector convergence and inclusive digital infrastructure.

The Fourth Article explains that school–community partnerships extend learning beyond classrooms by involving families, local institutions, and organisations in improving students’ learning and well-being. Policies such as the RTE Act (2009), NEP 2020, and Samagra Shiksha institutionalise community participation through SMCs and collaborative governance. Effective partnerships rely on communication, aligning school goals with community needs, resource sharing, and inclusion of marginalised groups. They enhance contextual learning, support health and nutrition, and strengthen community bonds. However, challenges include limited awareness, social barriers, resource constraints, and weak evaluation. Strengthening partnerships requires training stakeholders, using technology, ensuring inclusion, promoting innovation, and institutionalising sustainable collaboration.

The Fifth Article explains that school–community partnerships in Pakistan can improve access, equity and accountability, but policy intentions often fall short in practice. Although SMCs and School Councils exist, their effectiveness is constrained by capacity gaps, elite influence, social hierarchies and low parent–school trust. Emerging innovations such as SMS communication in Sindh, community monitoring, participatory governance in teacher education, and more inclusive SMC elections show promise. To institutionalise progress, Pakistan needs context-specific SMC training, monitoring

dashboards, small improvement grants, clearer legal mandates and integration of community-engagement principles into teacher preparation, enabling stronger local ownership and responsive schooling.

The Sixth Article describes E-NAY.COM, a grassroots initiative from Buenavista Elementary School in the Philippines that trained mothers and caregivers as home-based learning facilitators during COVID-19. To address parents’ anxieties, the project equipped “e-nays” to teach essential competencies, use modular materials, set up learning corners, and manage community hubs for module distribution and coordination. By valuing parents as co-educators and providing training, monitoring and feedback, the model sustained learning in underserved areas. Recognised by SEAMEO INNOTECH, it shows how low-cost, community-based approaches can strengthen resilient learners and centre inclusive education.

Across all six articles, strong school–family–community partnerships are shown to be essential for improving access, equity, quality and the overall effectiveness of education systems. Despite differing contexts, each case highlights the need for trust, capacity-building, clear roles, and inclusive engagement to make these collaborations meaningful. While China emphasises integrated, technology-enabled systems, India and Pakistan highlight the need to strengthen SMCs through capacity-building, resources, and clearer mandates. The Philippines example shows how empowering parents as co-educators can effectively sustain learning, especially in underserved contexts. Ultimately, a modern and resilient education system must place learners at the centre by mobilising families and communities as active partners in every stage of schooling.

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## Promoting an Interactive and Leading School Family and Community Relationships: Experience from China

Building a modern education system that integrates family education, school education and social education to achieve collaborative education is one of the core tasks of China's education modernisation. Given the current state of educational development, to better leverage the role of the interactive and leading relationship model among schools, families, and communities, exploration should primarily focus on four aspects: space, norms, knowledge, and interaction.

First, break down spatial barriers and leverage technological advances to create situational spaces. Schools, families, and communities have physical boundaries, and students and families may not necessarily be fixed in one community due to factors such as family relocation, school district divisions, and school closures. With the advent of a new round of technological revolution brought about by computers, the Internet, artificial intelligence and big data, education has undergone significant changes. Policies such as "China Education Modernisation 2035" emphasise the deep integration of the Internet into the entire education process, with schools, families and communities all part of it. The development of information technology has expanded and extended the educational space. Cooperation among schools, families, and communities is no longer restricted by space or time. With the development of information technology, communication and connection between schools and families, as well as between schools and communities, mediated by the Internet, are increasing, and can take place at any time and any place. Cooperation is no longer limited to the physical space, and the channels are constantly expanding.

Second, such a relationship plays the guiding role of schools to assist in regulating family and community education. China attaches great importance to the

cooperation among schools, families and communities. Relevant policy documents have included "building a collaborative education system between schools and families" in their plans, expecting schools to take the lead and use means such as publicity, education and guidance to fully play their guiding role. Schools have the advantage of conducting students' intellectual education and are the main place for students' growth; family education methods are personalised and have the advantage of conducting students' moral, labour and emotional education; communities have the advantage of cultivating students' practical abilities and can provide rich resources for schools and families. Therefore, in order to promote win-win cooperation among the three; first, schools should help families and communities unify their understanding and form a scientific and reasonable concept of education, and implement the educational policy; second, schools should actively provide public welfare family education and community education guidance services, and give full play to the role of the Communist Youth League and the Young Pioneers in community education; third, it is called on that families and communities should care about students' growth, clarify responsibilities, and create a good atmosphere for the healthy and coordinated development of education; fourth, change the knowledge view, adhere to all-round development, and promote the return of students' roles.

To accelerate educational modernisation and provide people with satisfactory education, cooperation among schools, families, and communities has an undeniable impact on reshaping the ecological relationships between individuals and individuals, and between individuals and society. This requires the entire education system to respect and care for the possibility of each life's development, coordinating the background of the times' transformation, the needs of life development,

and educational responsibilities. First, the educational concept of school, family and community cooperation should be updated. Second, higher requirements are put forward for teaching methods. When teachers are no longer the sole source of knowledge and schools are no longer the only place for learning, the roles of families and communities are also changing. Third, students' status is elevated. The basic value orientation of school, family, and community cooperation should focus on student growth and lay the foundation for lifelong development. Only by starting from the children themselves can the interaction among schools, families and communities be meaningful.

Fourth, enrich the subjects and content of interaction and explore the transformation of cooperation among school, family, and community. According to the

subjects of interaction, the previous relationships among schools, families, and communities mainly remained at the organisational and group levels. Whether it is school members entering the community or parents entering the school, it is inevitably formalistic. The interaction between schools and individuals in the community is informal, small, but it actually exists. In this interaction mode, only by abandoning utilitarianism and formalism can we truly start from the needs of interaction. How to institutionalise and normalise this individual-level interaction is a problem that educators should consider.

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A Three-day 'Regional Conference on Educational Planning in Asia-Pacific: Common Vision and Future Prospects' Organised by IIEP-UNESCO, held in Manila, Philippines from November 5-7, 2024

## Enhancing Learners' Participation through School–Community Partnership in India

Effective collaboration between schools and their surrounding communities strengthens student learning, fosters inclusive development, and aligns educational outcomes with local needs and priorities. This article examines the policy landscape in India, highlights key programmatic practices, and offers recommendations for building sustainable partnerships. Drawing on national frameworks such as the Right to Education Act (2009) and the National Education Policy (2020), these frameworks foreground the importance of active school–community linkages to improve access, equity, accountability, learning outcomes and together reframe the relationship between schools and their communities by pairing legal obligation with an expansive, practice-oriented vision.

RTE established legally binding mechanisms to involve local communities in school governance and monitoring. It also establishes community participation as a statutory pillar of elementary education, mandating local oversight, enrolment drives, and inclusive access so that parents and neighbourhood stakeholders share responsibility for children's attendance and basic schooling infrastructure. At the same time, NEP expands and deepens community roles by recommending structural, pedagogic, and institutional arrangements that invite broader local participation and shared responsibility for learning and school improvement. NEP (2020) builds on that statutory foundation by widening the scope of community engagement beyond accountability to collaborative teaching and learning, locally relevant curriculum inputs, and institutional arrangements such as school complexes that intentionally pool resources, enable shared professional development for teachers, and open schools as lifelong-learning centres for the neighbourhood. Together, the two documents imply a shift from one-way outreach to

sustained partnership: communities are not only monitors of enrollment and entitlements but also co-creators of contextually meaningful pedagogy, social support for vulnerable children, and localised solutions for learning recovery. Realising this integrated intent, however, requires more than policy alignment; it demands systematic capacity building of parent-governance bodies, clear operational mandates and resources for school complexes, routine forums that link community inputs to measurable learning outcomes, and sustained support from local government and civil society so that statutory duties become lived practices in classrooms and neighbourhoods. School–community partnerships mobilise shared resources, expertise, and social capital to support holistic child development.

In India's diverse socio-cultural fabric, these collaborations play a critical role in bridging resource gaps, promoting equity, and reinforcing the social accountability of schools. India has institutionalised community participation in education through a suite of flagship policies that embed local stakeholders at every level of school governance and programme delivery. Under the RTE Act (2009), Local School Management Committees (SMCs) are mandated to include parents, teachers, and elected community representatives, thereby empowering them to jointly oversee school operations, infrastructure development, and resource allocation. Building on this foundation, the *Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan* guidelines promote decentralised planning by encouraging village-level education committees to monitor student learning outcomes and mobilise community volunteers for remedial instruction, ensuring that interventions are responsive to local needs. The NEP (2020) further advances this participatory ethos by calling for holistic, multidisciplinary partnerships between schools and entities such as non-governmental

organisations, cultural institutions, and health service providers, with the aim of enriching curricular and co-curricular offerings that reflect the social and cultural context of each community. Collectively, these policies transform schools from isolated service providers into community-anchored hubs of shared accountability and collaboration.

Across India, diverse models demonstrate how these policies are implemented in practice. In Kerala's *Kudumbashree*–school collaborations, women's self-help groups co-manage midday meal kitchens and literacy classes, improving attendance and nutrition metrics. Similarly, Maharashtra's 'Bal Panchayats' involve students, parents, and community elders in decision-making, aligning school schedules with agricultural cycles. Rural Bihar has seen community-built libraries adjacent to schools, stocked through book-donation drives led by village panchayats and youth clubs. This model not only enhances reading culture but also fosters village-wide ownership of educational assets. In Andhra Pradesh, partnerships with local arts collectives have integrated folk theatre into life-skills curricula, deepening cultural relevance and improving student motivation. Health camps organised jointly by schools and primary health centres illustrate cross-sector collaboration for adolescent wellbeing.

In India's pluralistic educational landscape, meaningful school–community partnerships transform schools into vibrant hubs of shared learning and social development. By aligning national policies with grassroots innovations—anchored in trust, inclusivity, and capacity building—stakeholders can co-create resilient systems that address local challenges and celebrate cultural strengths. Future efforts should document scaled-up models, invest in community training, and refine policy instruments to deepen these bonds for the benefit of every learner. In the Indian context, fostering robust school–community partnerships requires a blend of collaborative planning, inclusive learning opportunities, systematic feedback, digital communication, and targeted local funding. Periodic joint workshops that convene teachers, parents, and community leaders enable the co-design of action plans addressing attendance, academic performance, and extra-curricular programmes, thereby aligning school practices with local priorities. Transforming school premises into community learning centres—offering evening adult education courses, vocational skill training modules, and health awareness sessions—further positions schools as hubs of lifelong learning and social engagement. Embedding simple feedback loops such as suggestion boxes and biannual community scorecards, ensures stakeholder input is tracked, and

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accountability is upheld. Leveraging digital platforms such as SMS alerts and community WhatsApp groups, enhances transparency by providing swift sharing of progress updates, calendared events, and student achievements with all participants. Finally, allocating modest grants for School Management Committee–led micro-projects—such as school gardens, playground refurbishments, or sanitation repairs—empowers local actors to implement contextually relevant improvements, reinforcing ownership and sustaining collective commitment to educational quality.

Sustained school–community partnerships are built on a foundation of trust and mutual respect, which flourish when schools and local stakeholders engage in transparent, two-way communication and collaborate to establish shared goals. Equally important is the systematic capacity-building of community volunteers,

who must be equipped with basic pedagogical techniques, learner-monitoring skills, and an understanding of child protection norms to participate effectively in teaching and learning. Finally, policy frameworks that permit local adaptation rather than enforcing uniform compliance empower schools and communities to co-design interventions that reflect their unique social, cultural, and economic realities, thereby reinforcing both relevance and ownership.

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## Community Engagement and Access to School Education in India: Policy Interventions, Challenges and the Role of NEP 2020

In India, the journey towards the universalisation of school education has been shaped by a range of policy interventions and programme efforts, along with active community engagement, which has led to significant progress over the years. Major initiatives include Operation Blackboard (1991), Shiksha Karmi Project (1987), Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (1983), Bihar Education Project (1991), Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project (1993), Mahila Samakhya (1989), Lok Jumbish Project (1992), Alternative Schools (2001), District Primary Education Programme (1994), and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (2001); flagship Centrally Sponsored Schemes in partnership with State Governments for achieving Universal Elementary Education (UEE) across the country.

As an extension of SSA, a significant step taken by the government was the enactment of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, enforced in 2009 as a fundamental right. Under this Act, every child between the ages of 6 and 14 years is entitled to free and compulsory education. The RTE Act laid down norms and standards, making it mandatory for the state to ensure that a school is available within accessible distance for every child. These frameworks mandated that all children in this age group must receive education, emphasising the role of the state and local communities in ensuring this right. The implementation of these policies and programmes has been accompanied by efforts to strengthen community engagement. One of the mandates of the RTE Act was the formation of School Management Committees (SMCs) at the village or community level. These committees are tasked with monitoring school functioning, preparing development plans, and ensuring accountability. The intention was to involve the community actively in the development and maintenance of schools, thereby fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility.

According to the 8th All India School Education Survey (AISES, NCERT, 2016), 91.21 per cent of habitations had access to primary education facilities within one km, and 87.58 per cent had access to upper primary education within three km. Out of a total of 11,37,833 habitations in the country, 10,37,833 (91.21 per cent) had primary schools within one km, with 66.30 per cent having schools located within the habitation itself. From a population perspective, 96.19 per cent of the rural population had access to primary education within one km, and 84.79 per cent had schools located within their habitation (AISES, NCERT, 2016). This expansion of school infrastructure was largely facilitated by the implementation of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, *Samagra* and Right to Education Act, 2009. The effectiveness of School Management Committees (SMCs), however, varies widely. In areas where committees are well-trained and empowered, they have significantly improved enrollment rates, reduced dropout rates, and addressed local issues such as mid-day meals, gender discrimination, and school safety. Moreover, Community-based Organisations (CBOs) and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) have played a key role, especially in remote and tribal regions where state mechanisms are often weak. Initiatives like village education committees, community libraries, and awareness drives have been instrumental in transforming mindsets and promoting the value of education. Despite policy mandates and mechanisms for community participation, several barriers still hinder equitable access to quality school education, especially for socially disadvantaged groups. Geographical barriers remain a major challenge, particularly in tribal belts, desert regions, and hill districts, where children often have to travel long distances to attend school. Socio-cultural factors also play a critical role. Girls, particularly from Muslim, Scheduled Caste (SC), and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities, often

face household responsibilities, early marriage, and restrictions on mobility. Discrimination in classrooms, both subtle and overt, discourages many children from continuing their education. Language barriers further marginalise tribal children, especially when the medium of instruction is different from their mother tongue. In many such cases, low enrollment, multi-grade classrooms, and single-teacher schools have contributed to poor learning outcomes.

The implementation of *Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan* (2018) aimed to address these gaps by focusing on improving infrastructure, teacher availability, and learning outcomes, while also promoting inclusive education. These programmes underscored the importance of community involvement, recognising that sustainable access to education goes beyond infrastructure and requires participation from parents, civil society, and local institutions. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a transformative shift by placing equity and inclusion at the centre of India's educational vision. The policy acknowledges that access to education must not only be about enrollment numbers but also ensure meaningful participation and quality learning for all, especially the Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs). NEP 2020 proposes a "school complex" model to enhance resource sharing among a cluster of schools, particularly benefiting small and under-resourced rural schools.

The policy also emphasises universal access from preschool to Grade 12, with a focus on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), foundational literacy, and numeracy. Importantly, NEP 2020 reinforces the need for community-based initiatives such as strengthening SMCs, leveraging local knowledge systems, and involving community elders in early education. The promotion of mother-tongue instruction in early grades is a significant step toward ensuring inclusion

for tribal and linguistic minorities. However, community engagement must go beyond token representation. For real impact, SMCs need adequate training, decision-making authority, and budgetary support. Voices from women, minorities, and lower-caste groups must be not only included but also actively empowered within school governance structures.

There is also a need for cross-sectoral convergence education access which is closely linked with nutrition (mid-day meals), child protection, health, and social welfare. To achieve the transformative goals of NEP 2020, a holistic, child-centric approach is essential. Social audits, participatory planning, and inclusive school environments will be crucial to bridge the remaining gaps. While technology can serve as a powerful enabler, this will only be effective if digital infrastructure is expanded equitably across rural and disadvantaged areas. Education is not merely a statutory right but a social contract between the state, the community, and the child. The active involvement of the community, backed by a strong policy framework as outlined in NEP 2020, is crucial to ensure that every child, irrespective of caste, class, gender, or geography, has equal access to quality and inclusive education to learn, grow, and thrive, thereby contributing to the development goals of a progressive and developed India.

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## School-Community Partnership in India: Policies and Practices

Education is not confined to the four walls of a classroom. It is a social process that thrives well when schools and stakeholders work together. The school-community partnerships are collaborative arrangements where schools engage families, local organisations, and community stakeholders to enhance student learning and well being. These partnerships establish that education is a shared responsibility and that communities play a vital role in shaping the quality and inclusivity of schooling.

A school–community partnership is a structured collaboration between educational institutions and community stakeholders (parents, voluntary organisations, Panchayati Raj Institutions, local self-government institutions, cultural groups, and commercial or business organisations) to achieve shared educational goals.

The partnership will help in achieving shared vision and goals, and mutual trust and respect. Resource sharing is the key to participation, which, in turn, will help in achieving accountability and evaluation. Such partnerships extend learning beyond textbooks, thus making education relevant to local realities.

Community participation in education is a natural course of action in India. In addition to the communities, the government also outlines a policy framework to foster partnerships through several policies and programmes. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 stresses holistic education, and calls for active community engagement in school governance, curriculum contextualisation, and resource mobilisation. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan integrates school improvement with community participation, encouraging School Management Committees (SMCs) to involve parents and local stakeholders. The Right to Education Act, 2009 mandates SMCs in every government school, ensuring that parents and community members have a

voice in school governance. The Concept Note of the Ministry of Education, Government of India, highlights strategies for involving communities in improving access, quality, and equity in education. These policies institutionalise partnerships, making them part of the governance structure of schools.

*Research and practice highlight several strategies that make partnerships successful:*

Regular meetings, newsletters, and digital platforms to keep parents and the community informed. Encouraging parents to motivate their wards to participate in classroom activities, decision-making, and school events. Also, it is the school administration’s responsibility to align school objectives with community aspirations such as literacy drives or vocational training. Communities are voluntarily providing infrastructure, financial support, etc, and schools are offering facilities for community use. Integrating local knowledge, crafts, and cultural practices into the curriculum. Respecting diversity and ensuring inclusion of marginalised groups.

Schools should collaborate with voluntary organisations, charitable institutions and local self-government bodies to provide counselling, healthcare, and nutrition. Outreach programmes such as literacy campaigns, environmental awareness drives, and skill development workshops. Regular assessment of partnership outcomes to refine strategies shall help in monitoring the progress of learners, and efforts of teachers and parents shall become visible. Encourage Professional development of teachers by motivating teachers to attend training programmes to effectively engage with all stakeholders.

- Students learn better when education is contextualised and supported by families.
- Marginalised groups gain voice and representation in school governance.

- Partnerships address health, nutrition, and emotional well-being alongside academics.
- Communities contribute infrastructure, expertise, and financial support.
- Schools become hubs of community life, strengthening bonds among diverse groups.

Despite strong policy frameworks, several challenges are being experienced, including communities may not fully understand their role in school governance. Parents and local stakeholders may lack the training or confidence to participate meaningfully. Gender norms, caste hierarchies, or language differences can hinder inclusive participation. Poor communities may struggle to contribute financially or materially. Partnerships often depend on individual leaders and may weaken when leadership changes. Lack of systematic evaluation reduces effectiveness.

School Management Committees (SMCs) in Karnataka villages have successfully mobilised parents to monitor teacher attendance and ensure midday meal quality. Community libraries, established in partnership with NGOs, provide supplementary learning resources for rural students. Vocational Training Programmes run jointly by schools and local industries prepare students for employment while addressing community skill needs. These examples show how partnerships can be tailored to local contexts.

To strengthen school–community partnerships, several steps are essential, an indicative list includes:

- Training parents, teachers, and community leaders in participatory governance.
- Using technology for communication, resource sharing, and monitoring.
- Ensuring participation of women, marginalised castes, and minority groups.
- Continuous refinement of policies to encourage innovation and flexibility.
- Systematic studies to identify best practices and replicate successful models.
- Institutionalising partnerships through legal frameworks and financial support.

School-community partnerships are not optional add-ons but essential components of effective education systems. The legal mechanisms, including the Right to Education Act (2009) National Education Policy 2020, have laid the foundation, but practices must evolve to ensure inclusivity, sustainability, and relevance. When schools and communities collaborate, education becomes a collective endeavour for empowering students, strengthening communities, and advancing social justice.

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The January–June 2025 and the July–December 2025 issues of the ANTRIEP Newsletter will focus on the themes ‘**The Effectiveness of Immersive Technology in the Teaching-Learning Process in Schools**’. and ‘**Health and Education with a Special Focus on the School Health Programme**’ respectively.

## Revitalising School-Community Partnerships in Pakistan: Bridging Policy and Practice

School-community partnerships are widely recognised as a vital mechanism for improving educational access, equity, and accountability—particularly in developing contexts like Pakistan. Over the past two decades, national and provincial education policies have emphasised the role of local communities in school governance, resource mobilisation, and oversight. Structures such as School Management Committees (SMCs) and School Councils were introduced to decentralise decision-making and foster grassroots participation.

Yet, despite these policy commitments, the operational reality remains fragmented. In many districts, community engagement is either symbolic or constrained by socio-political hierarchies, limited capacity, and a persistent trust deficit between parents and public institutions. As Pakistan continues to grapple with systemic challenges in its education sector—including teacher absenteeism, infrastructure gaps, and declining enrollment—revitalising school-community partnerships offers a strategic opportunity to re-anchor schools within their local ecosystems. This article examines the current landscape, identifies key challenges, and offers actionable recommendations to strengthen school-community collaboration in Pakistan's education sector.

Recent reforms and pilot initiatives in Pakistan's education sector are transforming school-community partnerships into dynamic, accountability-driven collaborations. SMS-based platforms in Sindh now enable real-time dialogue among parents, teachers, and officials, overcoming traditional communication barriers and fostering transparent oversight. Concurrently, community-led monitoring—where locals track teacher attendance, facilities, and student welfare—has cultivated shared responsibility and elevated communities from passive observers to active governors. At the systemic level, the Higher Education Commission has woven

participatory governance principles into teacher training, equipping educators to engage effectively with stakeholders. Finally, transparent elections for School Management Committees are breaking elite monopolies, boosting representation—especially of women and marginalised groups—and reinforcing the legitimacy of local school governance. Together, these innovations position community partnerships as foundational elements in Pakistan's drive for inclusive, accountable educational reform.

Recent initiatives in Pakistan's education sector underscore a pivotal shift towards embedding communities at the heart of school governance. Digital engagement platforms—most notably the SMS-based system piloted in Sindh—has enhanced real-time dialogue among parents, teachers, and education officials, streamlining grievance redressal and bolstering transparency. Complementing this technological leap, community-led monitoring projects have empowered local stakeholders to oversee teacher attendance, infrastructure maintenance, and student welfare, cultivating a shared sense of accountability and transforming passive observers into active participants.

At the policy level, the Higher Education Commission's overhaul of teacher education curricula marks a strategic integration of participatory governance principles into both pre-service and in-service training. This reform ensures that emerging educators possess the skills and mindsets to collaborate effectively with community members and adapt to contextual needs. Simultaneously, transparent and inclusive election processes for School Management Committees (SMCs) are dismantling entrenched elite capture, enabling broader representation—especially of women and marginalised groups—and enhancing the legitimacy of local governance structures. Together, these

interventions signal a critical juncture: by aligning digital tools, capacity-building, and democratic selection mechanisms, Pakistan can transition community partnerships from peripheral initiatives to foundational pillars of equitable and accountable education reform.

To institutionalise effective school-community partnerships in Pakistan, a multi-pronged policy approach is essential—one that addresses structural gaps, builds capacity, and fosters sustained engagement. First, targeted capacity-building initiatives must be introduced to equip School Management Committee (SMC) members with the skills necessary for governance, budgeting, and inclusive decision-making. These training modules should be context-sensitive and accessible, ensuring that even communities with limited literacy can participate meaningfully. In parallel, robust monitoring and evaluation systems should be established at the provincial level, including digital dashboards that track SMC functionality, participation rates, and impact metrics. Such tools would enable evidence-based policymaking and promote transparency.

To encourage sustained community involvement, engagement must be linked to tangible incentives. School improvement grants, public recognition schemes, and performance-based rewards can motivate active participation and reinforce the value of local oversight. Expanding the use of ICT platforms—such as SMS-based feedback systems—can further enhance communication between schools and communities, enabling real-time responsiveness and reducing bureaucratic

delays. Moreover, community engagement should be embedded within teacher education frameworks. By integrating participatory governance principles into both pre-service and in-service training, educators can be better prepared to collaborate with local stakeholders and foster inclusive school environments. Finally, legal mandates must be strengthened through amendments to provincial education acts, clearly defining the roles, powers, and accountability mechanisms of SMCs to ensure their legitimacy and operational autonomy.

In conclusion, school-community partnerships in Pakistan hold transformative potential for improving educational access, equity, and accountability. However, this potential can only be realised through coherent policy design, sustained capacity-building, and genuine local ownership. Bridging the gap between policy intent and grassroots realities requires institutional commitment and a cultural shift toward inclusive and participatory governance. By investing in community engagement as a strategic pillar of education reform, Pakistan can move closer to building a responsive, transparent, and equitable public education system that reflects the needs and aspirations of its citizens.

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## E-NAY.COM: A Community of Learning through Empowerment in Philippines

E-NAY.COM is a proof of strong partnership of schools and their communities from the time of pandemic until now because of its relevant contribution to schools and children's achievements. This initiative aimed to empower communities through empowered mothers or "enays" (*inay* or *nanay* in Filipino means mother) who serve as learning facilitators in their home for their own children and other learners that need help.

IE-nay.com was developed to address the concerns of parents and guardians in facilitating learning of their children during the pandemic. "Sir, pano' man kami makatukdo sa mga batit namon na lain man kami maaram, di naman kami maestro?" ("Sir, how can we teach our children if we do not know how to teach; we are not teachers?").

These were the exact words of Mrs. Melinda Lacsá, a mother and a grandmother of some pupils in Buenavista Elementary School in the province of Sorsogon. She expressed her thoughts and anxieties about the shift to distance learning through modules for the 2020-2021 academic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This statement, among many others from parents and guardians, served as a turning point for those in the education sector to come up with initiatives, to capacitate them, especially mothers, to be learning facilitators during the remote learning.

This impetus gave birth to E-nay.com or Education for Nanay in the Community in Buenavista Elementary School. This project aimed to facilitate the continuation of education in time of emergencies through alternative delivery modes with the aid of modules, activity sheets, and other learning materials. This is by capacitating parents on the different essential learning objectives and equipping them with strategies on how to effectively deliver lessons. E-nay.com is one of the Three Acts of Goodness (TAG) project implemented in Buenavista

Elementary School in its seven years of partnership and continuous spread of the TAG from the school to the community. The initiative also aimed to instill in parents and their children the importance of education despite disruptions and limitations brought about by emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic. With this, the project promoted not only alternative delivery modes but also the practice of kindness even in difficult situations. The proponent aims to be an instrument in sharing the value of being kind through education.

The project also helped address the difficulties associated with the establishment of educational centres such as libraries and drop-off areas for modules for small communities (*purok* in Filipino). The initiative allowed community members to have easier access to learning resources and other necessities given the current modular approach in most public schools. Moreover, it allowed parents to avoid poor internet connectivity, and distance to and from the school to hamper learning. Additionally, E-nay.com is a platform that can reach all learners through their "e-nays"—a play on "inay", the Filipino word for mother. An e-nay need not necessarily be the mother; it can be any member of the family who is part of the child's learning process and who can be a representative during meetings. Information and materials can be delivered directly to houses, making education more accessible. E-nay.com helps curb the spread of COVID-19 while making sure that learning is sustained even in remote areas like Buenavista Elementary School.

The E-Nay.com programme recognises that a child's education is the responsibility of those around him or her, not just the teachers. With the current situation, everyone can be part of the distance learning process. For many, it is the best option for now given the lack of internet access, even to electronic devices such as television,

radio, and personal computers, in many areas around the country. Through E-nay.com, mothers had been guided and capacitated to be mother-teacher volunteers or learning facilitators either on a full-time or part-time capacity. This enables them to be on equal footing with teachers in giving instructions and assistance to their learners. This also created a community of learners and teachers within and among family members.

Nine (9) E-nay.com centres had been established and managed by E-nay leaders that served as centres for module distribution and retrieval, and as learning hubs where books and other supplementary materials were available for borrowing. Each house has its own E-nay corner where learning takes place. To make learning even more organic, E-nay centres and corners were decorated with different educational materials that are helpful for both mothers and children. There are charts, mobiles, references, flags, and other similar materials that are suitable for different age levels available for borrowing. Parents and guardians have been usually blamed if learners fail to submit requirements. It is only now that many academic institutions recognise their invaluable role in a child's education. Through E-nay.com's unique model of delivery, parents and/or guardians are capacitated to be one of the best learning resources by empowering them to be learning facilitators.

In this way, they could give their children and wards the proper guidance for their lessons and requirements.

In 2021, the E-Nay.com was chosen as one of the SEAMEO INNOTECH Southeast Asian Educational Innovation Awards, and has been awarded a modest grant under SEAMEO INNOTECH's Educational Innovation Accelerator Programme (EIAP) to help spread the E-Nay.com model to other school-communities. The concept of E-nay.com proved that education can be delivered even at home through an active and productive partnership with parents and guardians. Remote learning can be effective if those in the academe are willing to share their expertise, resources, and time to capacitate, assist, and supervise stakeholders through the right approach, consistent monitoring, and constructive feedback. The pandemic has been a time of reflection wherein mothers and other family members are recognised for their worth as partners in the learning process.

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## News from ANTRIEP Member Institutions (July - December 2024)

### Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)

#### *Australia*

- The Australian Council for Educational Research partnered with the Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research on 1 October 2024 to support First Nations PhD scholars. Backed by philanthropic funding, the initiative promotes Indigenous research, supports completion, and aims to improve higher education access and outcomes.
- Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), in partnership with CSIRO, launched a specialised webinar series aimed at helping teachers better engage girls in digital technology education, on 11 October, 2024.
- ACER, in partnership with the Australian Government, launched the Education Analytics, Research and Capability-Building (EdARC) programme to enhance education policy and planning across the Asia-Pacific region, in November 2024.
- ACER and the Australian Government launched a new initiative to improve the quality of evidence and expertise used to inform education policies and programs in the Asia-Pacific region in November 2024.
- The Australian Council for Educational Research reported that the “Be You” initiative improves educators’ ability to support children’s mental health on 2 December 2024. Higher engagement led to better student resilience and learning outcomes, though time constraints remain a major barrier to effective implementation.
- ACER has partnered with the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) to develop a pioneering

toolkit designed to enhance global citizenship education (GCED) in December 2024.

- The Global Education Monitoring Centre hosted a symposium at ACER Indonesia’s ICAL on 10 December 2024, highlighting methods to align national education systems with SDG 4 benchmarks. Experts emphasised bridging gaps between global standards and local assessments to strengthen monitoring and improve education progress tracking worldwide.

### Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)

#### *Bangladesh*

- The Campaign for Popular Education hosted a press briefing in Dhaka on 2 October 2024, presenting a policy brief on continuous education transformation, officially reported on 3 October 2024. The brief emphasised a seamless, inclusive education framework from pre-primary to higher education, advocating curriculum reform, teacher development, and increased investment.
- BRAC launched ‘Otithi’, a community-based tourism initiative on 7 November 2024 to promote sustainable travel and local cultural heritage. The programme aims to empower rural communities economically while connecting tourists with authentic local experiences, reshaping Bangladesh’s tourism landscape.
- The BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL) hosted a workshop titled “Student Engagement: A Little Theory and a Lot of Interaction” for faculty and students, focusing on learner-centred approaches in ESL classrooms, in December 2024. This initiative highlights BRAC’s continued commitment to enhancing teaching practices, student engagement, and overall pedagogical quality

## **Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)**

*Bangladesh*

- CAMPE organised a discussion advocating for a unified education ministry spanning pre-primary to higher education to reduce disparities and improve policy coherence, recommending the creation of a National Education Transformation Commission to drive systemic reforms, teacher development and stronger governance, in October 2024.

## **Shanghai Academy of Educational Sciences (SAES)**

*China*

- The Shanghai Education Society's Education Supervision Committee Annual Meeting and Academic Report Conference (27 December, 2024) was held with participation from school representatives, supervisory committees, and SAES researchers. The conference featured a keynote by Professor Lu Baorong on science education and talent innovation, focusing on enhancing school-level science education, strengthening teacher capacity, and promoting innovation-driven education within the school system.

## **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)**

*India*

- NCERT's "Listening to Learn" webinar series featured multiple sessions in the second half of 2024, including "Developing an Earthquake Resilient Society" on 26 July, 2024 and "Exploring the Depths of Kautilya's Arthashastra" on 6 December, 2024.

- The NCERT Promoting Mental Health & Well-Being in School document (August 2024) highlights that NCERT's Mental Health Cell regularly conducts workshops, orientations, webinars, and interactive sessions such as "Sahyog" and "Paricharcha", to strengthen the capacity of school teachers, counsellors, and administrators.
- The Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), NCERT, in collaboration with COL-CEMCA, organised a five-day online training programme titled "AI in Education." The programme was conducted in two phases: the English version from 18th to 22nd November 2024 and the Hindi version from 25th to 29th November 2024, with sessions held daily from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

## **National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA)**

*India*

- The Department of School and Non-Formal Education organized a two-day National Workshop on "Transforming Teacher Education Programme and National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST)" aligned with NEP 2020. This collaborative programme, conducted by NIEPA and NCTE, was held on 12–13 September 2024 at the Indian National Science Academy (INSA), New Delhi, and was attended by 45 participants.
- The Department of School and Non-Formal Education at NIEPA conducted a five-day Capacity Building Programme for Disruptive Digital Technologies: Integration in TEIs (21–25 October, 2024) in New Delhi. The hands-on programme aimed to equip participants with the knowledge and skills required to integrate disruptive digital technologies into Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).

- The Department of Educational Planning organised the North-Eastern Regional Workshop on “Sharing of Select Modules on Outcome-Based District Planning in School Education” (4–8 November, 2024) at Itanagar, in collaboration with Samagra Shiksha and the Government of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The Department of School and Non-Formal Education hosted a five-day Training Programme on Using Indicators and Evidence in Framing Policy Policies in School Education (4–8 November, 2024) at NIEPA, New Delhi, wherein 70 representatives from Samagra Shiksha and Directorates of School Education from 23 states and Union Territories participated.
- The Department of School and Non-Formal Education organised a two-day International Seminar on Quality Early Childhood Education (ECE): Local Action for Global Impact (14–15 November, 2024) at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, focusing on global and local strategies to enhance early childhood education quality.

**South-East Asian Ministers of  
Education Organisation  
Regional Centre for Educational  
Innovation and Technology  
(SEAMEO INNOTECH)**

*Philippines*

- ChildFund Philippines and SEAMEO INNOTECH launched the Philippines’ first localised Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) framework (2024–27) in July 2024. The framework is tailored to Filipino cultural contexts, engages teachers, students, and communities, and aims to integrate SEL into the K–12 curriculum while supporting teacher professional development through e-learning.

- SEAMEO INNOTECH conducted an in-country technical assistance programme in Muara Enim Regency, South Sumatra, Indonesia, titled “Empowering Teachers Through the Southeast Asia Teacher Competency Framework” (11–13 July, 2024). The programme focused on building the capacity of English teachers and school heads under the SEA Teacher Competency Framework (SEA TCF).
- SEAMEO INNOTECH ran a webinar series called “Fostering the ‘I’ in AI”, including the session “Exploring Modern Tools for AI in Education” (19 July, 2024). The final webinar in the series, “AI Governance in Education – Navigating Ethical Implications and Policy Challenges”, was scheduled for 16 August, 2024.
- SEAMEO INNOTECH, in collaboration with IIEP-UNESCO, hosted the regional conference “Common Vision and Future Prospects” (5–7 November, 2024) in Manila, Philippines. The 2024 Regional Conference on Educational Planning in Asia-Pacific brought together over 100 delegates from 26 countries and 48 educational ministries or research institutions, including heads of planning departments, directors of national training and research institutions, ministry representatives, development partners, and UNESCO field offices from Bangkok, Delhi, Jakarta, Kathmandu, and the Pacific.
- In November 2024, SEAMEO INNOTECH partnered with Saylor Academy to offer free business education courses, providing flexible, open-access learning opportunities to help educators and learners develop 21st-century skills.

## **Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI)**

*South Korea*

- The Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program was held on 3 July 2024 at the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI), featuring a thematic lecture on “Korean Education Policy Issues and Measures.”
- A meeting with a delegation from the China National Academy of Educational Sciences (CNAES) was held on 3 September 2024 at Conference Room 203, Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI).
- A meeting with a delegation from the Republican Scientific and Methodological Center for the Development of Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan was held on 15 October 2024 at the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI).
- KEDI released the KEDI Journal of Educational Policy Vol. 21 No. 2 on 31 December, 2024. The latest issue is now available online and aims to contribute significantly to the understanding and practice of educational policy through scholarly articles and reports on research projects of wide international scope.

## **Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences (VNIES)**

*Vietnam*

- Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences, in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women), organised a workshop entitled "Orientation for the Pilot Implementation of the Toolkit for Building Respectful and

Equal Relationships in Continuing Education Institutions" on September 12, 2024.

- Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Training and UNICEF Vietnam, organised a training course on strengthening the system and use of educational data in Vietnam: The relationship between teacher characteristics and student learning outcomes on September 23, 2024.
- Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences, in collaboration with the Department of Continuing Education and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women), organised a training course on "Pilot Implementation of the Toolkit for Building Respectful and Equal Relationships in Continuing Education Institutions" for administrators and teachers of continuing education institutions on September 26-27, 2024.
- Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences held a workshop to summarise the "Research Program on developing standards for assessing students' competencies and qualities in subjects and educational activities according to the 2018 General Education Program" on December 4, 2024
- The 2024 Annual Scientific Conference on “Education in the Digital World” was held at the Daewoo Hotel in Hanoi. The event was co-organised by the Vietnam Academy of Educational Sciences (VAES), UNICEF, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), and in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Angel's Haven (Korea), and the Vietnam Association for Education for All (VAEFA) on December 6-7, 2024.

## ANTRIEP Member Institutions

1. Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), 19 Prospect Hill Road, Private Bag – 55, Camberwell, Melbourne, VICTORIA-3124, Australia ([www.acer.edu.au](http://www.acer.edu.au))
2. Balitbang Dikbud Centre for Policy Research (Puslit Penelitian), Office for Educational and Culture Research and Development (Balitbang Dikb), Ministry of Education and Culture, Jalan Jenderal Sudirman, Senayan, JAKARTA-12070, Indonesia. ([www.kemdikbud.go.id](http://www.kemdikbud.go.id))
3. Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) 75, Mohakhali Commercial Area, DHAKA – 1212, Bangladesh ([www.brac.net](http://www.brac.net))
4. Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), 5/14, Humayun Road, Mohammadpur, DHAKA – 1207, Bangladesh ([www.campebd.org](http://www.campebd.org))
5. Centre for Multi-Disciplinary Development Research (CMDR), R.S. No. 9A2, Plot No. 82, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Nagar, Near Yalakki Shetter Colony, Lakamanahalli, Dharwad-580004 KARNATAKA, India ([www.cmdr.ac.in](http://www.cmdr.ac.in))
6. National Institute of Education (NIE), P.O. Box 21, High Level Road, Maharagama, Sri Lanka ([www.nie.lk](http://www.nie.lk))
7. Institut Aminuddin Baki (National Institute of Educational Management and Leadership), Malaysia Education Ministry, Value Education Complex 71760 Bandar Enstek, Negeri Sembilan, MALAYSIA (<http://iab.moe.edu.my>)
8. International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), 7-9 rue Eugene-Delacroix, 75116 PARIS, France ([www.iiep.unesco.org](http://www.iiep.unesco.org))
9. Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI), 7, Gyohak-ro, Deoksan-eup, Jincheon-gun, Chungcheongbuk-do, South Korea ([www.kedi.re.kr](http://www.kedi.re.kr))
10. National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM), Dhanmodi, DHAKA – 1205, Bangladesh ([www.naem.gov.bd](http://www.naem.gov.bd))
11. National Centre for Educational Development (NCED), Sanothimi, BHAKTAPUR 2050, Nepal ([www.nced.gov.np](http://www.nced.gov.np))
12. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), 17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi - 110 016 (INDIA) ([www.ncert.nic.in](http://www.ncert.nic.in))
13. National Institute of Education (NIE), 80, Preah Nordom Blvd, Phnom Penh-120207, Cambodia ([www.nie.edu.kh](http://www.nie.edu.kh))
14. National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), 17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi –110016, India ([www.niepa.ac.in](http://www.niepa.ac.in))
15. Pakistan Institute of Education, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Taleemi Chowk, G-8/1, ISLAMABAD-44000, PAKISTAN (<http://aepam.edu.pk>)
16. Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), Tribhuvan University, G.P.O. Box 2161, Balkhu, KATHMANDU, Nepal ([www.cerid.org](http://www.cerid.org))
17. Institute of Human Resource Development (SIHRD), Shanghai Academy of Educational Sciences 21 Chaling Road, SHANGHAI, P.R.C.-200032, China
18. South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology, SEAMEO INNOTECH P.O. Box 207, Commonwealth Avenue, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City 1101, Philippines ([www.seameo-innotech.org](http://www.seameo-innotech.org))
19. State Institute of Educational Management & Training (SIEMAT), 25, Sir P.C. Banerjee Road, Allenganj, Prayagraj-211002, ALLAHABAD, Uttar Pradesh, India ([www.siematup.org](http://www.siematup.org))
20. The Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan (AKES,P) 1-5/ B-VII, Federal B Area, Karimabad, Karachi – 75950, PAKISTAN ([www.akdn.org/akes](http://www.akdn.org/akes))
21. The Aga Khan University - Institute for Educational Development, (AKU-IED), 1-5/B-VII, Federal B. Area Karimabad, KARACHI-75950, Pakistan (<http://www.aku.edu/iedpk>)
22. Vietnam Institute of Educational Sciences (VNIES), Centre for Higher and Vocational Education Studies 101, Tran Hung Dao Hoan Kiem HANOI CITY, Vietnam ([www.vnrw.vnies.edu.in](http://www.vnrw.vnies.edu.in))

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