

GOING LOCAL FOR DATA

Union council-level education statistics and how they can inform policy

Case Study of District Thatta

٨٨ ٨٨ ٨٨ ٨٨
٨٨ ٨٨ ٨٨ ٨٨



GOING LOCAL FOR DATA

Union council-level education statistics and
how they can inform policy

Case Study of District Thatta

Citation

Alif Ailaan. 2015. Going Local For Data: Union council-level education statistics and how they can inform policy. Islamabad: Alif Ailaan. iii + 32 pp.

ISBN 978-969-23023-9-5

CONTENTS

Acronyms and Abbreviations	vi
Executive Summary	vii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Data sources	1
1.2 Limitations of the analysis	4
2. ENROLMENT AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN	5
2.1 School attendance	5
2.2 Non-enrolment in school	9
2.3 Dropping out of school	11
2.4 Distance to school	11
3. SCHOOLING PROVISION AND ENVIRONMENT	13
3.1 School provision	13
3.2 School operation	16
3.3 School infrastructure	17
3.4 Parents' opinions of schools and teachers	17
4. EDUCATION OUTCOMES	20
5. NUTRITION AND EDUCATION	21
5.1 Mid-upper arm circumference data	22
7. CONCLUSIONS	25
8. RECOMMENDATIONS	26
9. ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY FOR THE COLLECTION OF NUTRITIONAL AND ANTHROPOMETRY DATA	27
10. ANNEX 2: SAMPLE PROFILE OF SSO HOUSEHOLD SURVEY	28
11. ANNEX 3: DETAILED DATA TABLES	30

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Data sources used for analysis	2
Table 2: District Thatta statistics before and after division	4
Table 3: NER and GER of Mirpur Sakro by gender and urban/rural location	6
Table 4: Enrolment rates in eight union councils of District Thatta	6
Table 5: Schooling status of households in eight union councils of District Thatta	7
Table 6: School enrolment by gender in eight union councils of District Thatta	8
Table 7: School attendance in UC Mirpur Sakro	8
Table 8: Reasons for child never enrolling in school (UC Mirpur Sakro)	10
Table 9: Reasons for dropping out of school (UC Mirpur Sakro)	11
Table 10: Average travel time to school in UC Mirpur Sakro	12
Table 11: Provision of schools by type within selected eight union councils of District Thatta	14
Table 12: Availability and perceptions of different types of schools in UC Mirpur Sakro ...	16
Table 13: Functional schools in selected eight union councils of District Thatta	16
Table 14: Provision of infrastructure by school type in selected eight union councils of District Thatta	17
Table 15: Average SAT scores (%) in District Thatta	20
Table 16: Status of malnutrition in Pakistan	21
Table 17: Food consumed by pregnant and lactating women in UC Mirpur Sakro	23
Table 18: Food consumed by children under three years of age in UC Mirpur Sakro	24
Table 19: Profile of the sample population UC Mirpur Sakro	28
Table 20: Schooling status of children in selected eight UCs of District Thatta	30
Table 21: Average SAT scores (%) by district for grades 5 and 8 - 2014	31
Table 22: Number and type of schools in selected eight union councils of District Thatta	32

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Union Councils surveyed by RSPN and Alif Ailaan	3
Figure 2: Out-of-school children in eight union councils of District Thatta	7
Figure 3: Profile of out-of-school children by asset index and gender in UC Mirpur Sakro	9
Figure 4: Number of schools by level in selected eight union councils of District Thatta ..	13
Figure 5: School provision versus demand in selected eight union councils of District Thatta	15
Figure 6: Parental reporting of school closures in UC Mirpur Sakro	18
Figure 7: Parental reporting of teacher absence in UC Mirpur Sakro	18
Figure 8: Parental reporting of corporal punishment in UC Mirpur Sakro	19
Figure 9: Corporal punishment in urban and rural areas of UC Mirpur Sakro	19
Figure 10: Malnutrition among children in UC Mirpur Sakro	22
Figure 11: Mean MUAC among children in UC Mirpur Sakro, versus WHO standard	22
Figure 12: Measurement collection	27
Figure 13: Average monthly income in UC Mirpur Sakro (in rupees)	29
Figure 14: Occupation of the head of household in Mirpur Sakro	29

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Alif Ailaan
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
Govt	Government
HH	Household
HHS	Household Survey
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
Math	Mathematics
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MUAC	Mid-Upper Arm Circumference
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNS	National Nutrition Survey
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
PDHS	Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey
PKR	Pakistani Rupee
PNS	Pakistan Nutrition Survey
PSLM	Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey
Rs.	Rupees
RSPN	Rural Support Programmes Network, Pakistan
SAT	Standardised Achievement Test
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEMIS	Sindh Education Management Information System
SSO	Sehatmand Sindh Organisation
UC	Union Council
WHO	World Health Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education is a serious and continuous challenge in District Thatta. It is one of the lowest performing districts in Pakistan, and the worst in Sindh. There are many districts like District Thatta that have continued to perform poorly and are lagging behind on all measures of a good education system, one of the main reasons why Pakistan has been far behind the MDG target of universal primary education. If Pakistan doesn't begin to take urgent action to fix education at the level of schools, communities, parents and students, it is unlikely to fare any better at the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which it committed to achieving at the UN General Assembly in 2015.

Commissioning a local level study in District Thatta, and its Union Council of Mirpur Sakro, was therefore a deliberate choice. Alif Ailaan is committed to supporting education reform across Pakistan, and believes that change needs to happen at both the macro and micro levels. But there is an absence of data and analysis within districts and local communities to help fully understand how and why there are failures in enrolment, retention and quality of education. The purpose of this document is to illuminate the richness and diversity of local contexts in the education space, to demonstrate the importance of focusing at the local level and ensuring the inclusion of local issues in policy responses to the challenges of low enrolment, low retention and low quality education.

This report triangulates primary and secondary data sources to improve understanding and guide innovation in local education reform. District Thatta faces a critical problem: only one in three of the district's children goes to school. In the selected eight UCs of District Thatta, 71% of girls and 64% of boys are out of school, most of whom have never gone to school, and many more are in the wrong school grade. There are multiple barriers to enrolment, mostly related directly or indirectly to the government's supply of schooling. This is consistent across all groups regardless of family income, gender or location. Any effort to generate 100% enrolment needs to empower nearly 20,000 households and enable parents to send more than 53,000 children to school.

Levels of malnutrition are alarmingly high with more than half the children in Mirpur Sakro being stunted, one-third underweight and one-quarter showing signs of wasting. Their diet, and that of pregnant and lactating mothers, lacks essential nutrition.

Our school and household censuses, commissioned for this report, confirm that ghost schools are far more prevalent than recorded in government data. Half of the government schools we surveyed in eight union councils of District Thatta are closed – but all private schools are open, with higher standards of infrastructure. More than half of enrolled children in urban areas attend a private school (53%) but almost all in rural areas attend a government school (85%). Many government schools have a long way to go in meeting the expectations of parents and children. In certain Union Councils, some startling findings emerged. One example: In UC Mirpur Sakro more than a quarter of parents said their child had been beaten by his or her teacher at school (28%), and a similar number said that their child didn't want to go to school because of corporal punishment.

The local focus of this study finds that no two communities are the same, and that each union council in District Thatta has a different set of needs and priorities for education reform. In some locations ghost schools prevent children from going to school, whilst in other areas financial constraints depress school attendance figures. This means there is no one issue upon which demands for reform should focus across District Thatta as a whole. Local change requires a local focus in any initiative for education reform.

Nevertheless some persistent themes emerge that apply to all local conversations about education:

- There are difficulties in the **availability and comparability of data for both government and private school systems**; in the former there are inconsistencies in trend data, in the latter an absence of any data, and lack of standardised comparison data exists to allow each sector to learn from the other. This needs to change. Pakistan needs robust and comparable data for all schools: government, private, non-profit and madrassas. The journey to collecting it begins at the school, traverses through the union council, the tehsil/taluka/town, onto the district, and consolidated at the provincial level.

- A startling number of schools are non-functional – in eight union councils across District Thatta our survey revealed that 213 out of a total of 444 schools were simply not open. The government data suggests only 26% of schools as being non-functional, our survey suggests 48%. This is an alarming discrepancy.
- Even those schools that are open and functional barely deserve that label. Many working schools do not have the necessary facilities or infrastructure to ensure student safety and comfort: and this tends to drive dropout rates, especially for young girls, particularly those entering puberty. Government at all tiers will never be able to address enrolment and retention challenges without taking account of the needs of children. One easy instrument government officials must use is to imagine sending their own sons and daughters to schools with no boundary walls, no running water in the toilets, no electricity during the hot spring, summer and autumn months, and no drinking water. None of these challenges can be addressed with the available quantum of public sector funding for education, and a significant leap in the funding of schools in the **education budget, and how efficiently that budget is used** is an urgent need.
- In the drive to improve enrolment and retention it will be important to look beyond the 'easy wins' and focus on the poorest quintile, or at least the **poorest 40% of households and children**. This is the demographic segment that suffers the most from a dilapidated and dysfunctional government school system – because this is the demographic segment that needs education as a social and economic equaliser the most. The current state of government schools – which are attended largely by those that cannot afford or reach a private school – represents an indirect and informal sort of economic apartheid for Pakistan's poor.
- Enrolment and retention are not the only measures of success. Education reform must also look at the **quality of education** and student outcomes, improving literacy and numeracy to strengthen Pakistan's economic development. However achieving better results in schools and ensuring quality is a daunting target for schools to which teachers do not regularly go, and where facilities do not exist. Moreover, high levels of malnutrition among the cohorts of school-entering children means that many students are entering the school system with no chance, whatsoever, of succeeding. Nutrition is a vital and urgent issue in Pakistan's education system.

We hope that this report can offer insights to government officials at districts, tehsils/talukas/towns and union councils across Pakistan. If it helps produce a richer conversation about the kind of data needed to inform and empower local communities to demand and deliver improved education outcomes, we will consider this effort to have been worthwhile.

INTRODUCTION

Education is critical to the development and prosperity of Pakistan. With more than 25 million children out of school¹, the scale of reform required to improve student enrolment, retention and learning outcomes can be difficult to grasp. Alif Ailaan works with parents, education providers and politicians to campaign for education reform at the federal, provincial and local levels. It is within districts, union councils and individual communities that many of the necessary improvements are easiest to comprehend, plan and deliver.

Alif Ailaan and its partners have selected District Thatta as a district of great need in which a joined-up approach to education reform can be piloted. This report pulls together several new and existing data sources to profile the district and eight of its union councils; it identifies its underlying problems and potential solutions; and sets a benchmark against which future improvements can be measured. The data in this report feeds into a broad set of community-led education reforms to get more children into school, keep them in school and improve the quality of the education they receive.

The standard of education in District Thatta is extremely poor. It is the lowest performing district in Sindh, with a Net Primary Enrolment Rate² of 32%³ and a Gross Primary Enrolment Rate of 57%, and ranks 132 of the 142 districts graded nationwide in the 2015 Alif Ailaan District Education Rankings⁴. Within District Thatta, the union council of Mirpur Sakro is one of the worst performing union councils on every relevant measure. It is a location in which effective changes to the education system have the potential to deliver significant improvements for the lives of thousands of children.

This report collates education statistics for District Thatta, with an emphasis on UC Mirpur Sakro. It provides the basis for a data-led reform programme targeting the education of around 10,000 children of primary school age, drawing on an improved understanding of the characteristics of these out-of-school children (OOSC) and the factors that influence their parents' decisions. We hope that this report, and the broader community exemplar campaign that it supports, will encourage other district governments, politicians, education providers and local communities to emulate this data-led approach to education reform.

DATA SOURCES

This report draws on five data sources. Two of the surveys were commissioned by Alif Ailaan specifically to improve the collective understanding of the population of and education within District Thatta, with a focus on UC Mirpur Sakro. The other three data sources summarise existing government data.

-
1. 25 Million Broken Promises: The crisis of Pakistan's out-of-school children (2014). Alif Ailaan.
 2. The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) is the total number of students in the theoretical age group for a given level of education enrolled in that level, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is the number of students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education. NER is always under 100 whereas GER can sometimes be more than 100.
 3. Pakistan Social Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLSM) 2013-14.
 4. Alif Ailaan Pakistan District Education Rankings (2015).

Table 1: Data sources used for analysis

Dataset	Type	Unit of analysis	Source	Themes	Sample size and coverage
SSO and Alif Ailaan household survey 2014	Survey	Household and individual	Non-government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment • Nutrition • Anthropometry 	1,223 households in Mirpur Sakro
RSPN and Alif Ailaan household and school census 2014	Census	Household and school	Non-government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment • School provision and infrastructure 	35,790 households, 466 public and private schools in eight union councils
SEMIS school data 2013-14	Census	School	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment • School provision • Teachers 	46,724 public schools in Sindh
SAT abridged data 2013-14	Exam results database	Student	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning outcomes 	232,411 public school students
National survey reports (various)	Survey	Household and individual	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic • Economic • Health • Nutrition 	-

Sehatmand Sindh Organisation (SSO) and Alif Ailaan Household Survey

On behalf of Alif Ailaan the Sehatmand Sindh Organisation collected data on the schooling status, socio-economic, demographic and household characteristics of five to sixteen year old children in Mirpur Sakro. The survey also collected information about the nutritional habits and anthropometry⁵ of children, and pregnant and lactating women. The interviews were conducted in Sindhi with mothers who spoke for themselves and on behalf of their children. The survey covered a systematic sample of 1,223 households in fifty communities in the union council.

Rural Support Pakistan Network (RSPN) and Alif Ailaan Household and School Census

The Rural Support Pakistan Network used its Rural Support Programmes (RSP) fostered Local Support Organisations (LSOs) to map all households and schools in eight union councils⁶ and then conduct a census, covering a total of 35,790 households and 466 government and private schools. RSPN gathered information on the number of children between the ages of five and sixteen in each household, and whether or not they were enrolled in school. Information was also collected on school type, infrastructure and teacher attendance.

The Sindh Education Management Information System (SEMIS)

The Sindh Education Management Information System (SEMIS) provides data on the total number and type of schools within Sindh. This provides comparator data on the level and type of educational institutions available in District Thatta as compared to other districts in Sindh. The data are collected and managed by the Government of Sindh and therefore only cover public schools.

5. Anthropometry is the scientific study of the measurements and proportions of the human body.

6. Buhara, Chato Chand, Garho, Gharo, Haji Ghirano, Keti Bundar, Sukhpur and Mirpur Sakro.

LIMITATIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

We acknowledge that there are some limitations to the data collated in this report. These limitations are set out below. Despite the limits to these published datasets we are confident that the analysis presented here is robust and of significant value.

- District Thatta was divided into two districts, District Thatta and Sujawal, in late 2013. The data for District Thatta before and after it was divided into two districts are presented in table 2. This limitation to trend data is partly overcome through the availability of individual record-level data for the previous year. It is for the moment difficult to ascertain whether a drop in the number of schools, enrolment levels and teachers are due to the division of the district or through an actual drop in numbers.

Table 2: District Thatta statistics before and after division

Number of:	District Thatta and Sujawal (combined)				District Thatta without Sujawal	Sujawal
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2013-14	2013-14
Government schools (all levels)	3,306	3,254	3,217	3,204	1,538	1,666
Enrolled students	162,663	165,620	165,889	153,676	76,286	77,390
Teachers	5,586	5,642	5,517	5,613	2,891	2,722

Source: SEMIS published reports 2010-2014

- SAT results are only for government schools, therefore learning outcomes of schools cannot be compared with those of private schools. The SAT data only provides total scores, not scores for individual questions, limiting the scope of analysis.
- SEMIS also covers only government schools. To overcome this limitation we collected primary data on all government and private schools in eight selected union councils through the RSPN census, presented in this report.
- The SSO household survey collected data on all the main issues in this report, but collected data on age of children in years rather than months and therefore does not allow analysis of anthropometric data on a monthly basis.
- The RSPN data on school census list reasons for closure of schools as a remark, there was no explicit question on reasons

ENROLMENT AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN

District Thatta faces a critical problem: only one in three of the district's children goes to school⁸. In the 2013-14 school year there were 76,283 students attending a government school, of which 46,765 were boys and 29,521 were girls⁹ : these numbers were dwarfed by the 67% of children who were out of school¹⁰ . This section charts patterns of student enrolment and explores reasons why children are not in school.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

There is no single measure of enrolment, given the pattern of schooling and attendance. However, the two key measures are:

- **Net Enrolment Rate (NER):** the total number of students in the theoretical age group for a given level of education enrolled in that level, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group.

For example, in a hypothetical district there are 1,000 children aged five to nine, who should be attending a primary school class; of these 1,000 children, 800 are actually enrolled in a primary school class, giving an NER of 80%

- **Gross Enrolment Rate (GER):** the total number of student of any age enrolled in a given level of education, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to that same level of education.

In the hypothetical district of 1,000 children aged five to nine, who should be attending a primary school class, there could actually be 1,200 children enrolled in a primary school class, giving an GER of 120%

- NER is always 100% or less, whereas GER can sometimes be more than 100%. A low NER indicates that many children are not in school; a high GER might imply that many students are in a lower than expected school grade due to low education attainment, or late enrolment in school.

Urban areas of Union Council Mirpur Sakro tend to have higher levels of enrolment, particularly at the middle school level, and greater equality between boys and girls, but enrolment levels are very poor among all groups of children. Looking at both the NER and GER in this area, on every measure fewer than half of children are in primary school, with a similar level of overall (gross) enrolment at middle school level. This already disappointing finding obscures notable differences by gender, grade and rurality. At the primary school level boys are somewhat more likely than girls to be enrolled, with the gap growing at the middle school level; primary school enrolment rates are similar between genders in urban areas, but higher for boys in rural areas.

The urban/rural divide is larger at the middle school level with twice as many boys as girls attending middle school in rural areas, versus near-parity in urban areas. The very low NER and notably higher GER for middle school highlights that very few children are enrolled in the appropriate school grade relative to their age.

8. Alif Ailaan. 2014. 25 million broken promises: the crisis of Pakistan's out-of-school children.

9. SEMIS school census, 2013-14; SEMIS provides enrolment data for government schools only.

10. RSPN and Alif Ailaan household census, 2014.

Table 3: NER and GER of Mirpur Sakro by gender, class and urban/ rural location

Gender	Primary School				Middle School			
	Statistic	Rural	Urban	Total	Statistic	Rural	Urban	Total
Boys	NER	50%	39%	45%	NER	4%	18%	11%
	GER	53%	46%	49%	GER	54%	51%	52%
Girls	NER	37%	41%	39%	NER	1%	11%	6%
	GER	39%	46%	42%	GER	25%	49%	37%
Total	NER	44%	40%	42%	NER	2%	14%	8%
	GER	46%	46%	46%	GER	40%	50%	45%

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014.

Note: Primary school = ages 5-9 years, grades 1-5; Middle school = ages 10-12 years, grades 6-8

Data from a broader set of eight union councils in the RSPN household census reconfirms this pattern. More than fifty three thousand children are out of school across these areas, including more than seven in ten girls and six in ten boys (71% and 64% respectively).

Table 4: Enrolment rates in eight union councils of District Thatta

Children aged 5 to 16:		Girls	Boys	Total
Currently enrolled in school	n	10,823	15,352	26,175
	%	29%	36%	33%
Out of school	n	26,025	27,135	53,160
	%	71%	64%	67%

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan household census, 2014

These headline enrolment figures obscure a more complex pattern of enrolment and retention. Within households with children in these eight union councils, only a quarter send all of their children to school (23%). Just over half send none of their children to school (54%), while the remaining quarter of households some children are in school and some are not (23%). This may be due to age, gender, or a combination of these and other factors. Regardless of cause the scale of the enrolment problem is significant, with any drive to reach 100% enrolment needing to empower nearly 20,000 households and enable parents to send more than 53,000 children to school.

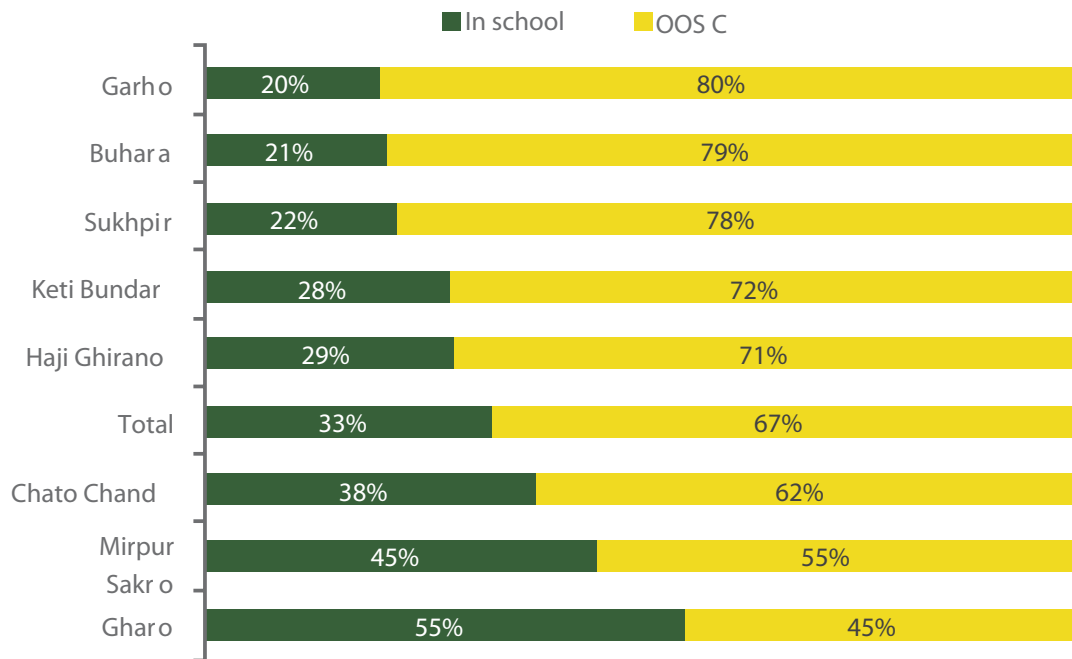
Table 5: Schooling status of households in eight union councils of District Thatta

Schooling status of children in households	Number of households	Proportion of all households	Proportion of households with children
All children in school	5,897	17%	23%
Some children in school, some out of school	5,858	16%	23%
All children out of school	13,975	39%	54%
No children in household	10,031	28%	--

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan household census, 2014

The pattern of enrolment is not consistent across union councils. In the eight union councils surveyed by RSPN, enrolment levels were as low as one in five in Garho (20%) and Buhara (21%). Only in Gharo (different and distinct from Garho) were more than half of children (55%) in school. Gharo is perhaps the exception within these union councils, as it is the only one where there is near parity between boys and girls. In each other location, boys are more likely than girls to be in school.

Figure 2: Out-of-school children in eight union councils of District Thatta



Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan household census, 2014

Table 6: School enrolment by gender in eight union councils of District Thatta

Union council	Girls		Boys	
	In school	Out of school	In school	Out of school
Buhara	16%	84%	26%	74%
Chato Chand	31%	69%	45%	55%
Garho	16%	84%	24%	76%
Gharo	55%	45%	54%	46%
Haji Ghirano	27%	73%	30%	70%
Keti Bundar	23%	77%	32%	68%
Mirpur Sakro	39%	61%	50%	50%
Sukhpur	17%	83%	26%	74%
Total	29%	71%	36%	64%

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan household census, 2014

When we look in more detail at Mirpur Sakro using the SSO data, we see that some out-of-school children do have the experience of education. One in ten (10%) have attended school in the past but dropped out, a largely consistent pattern regardless of location or gender. This does not affect the overall pattern of enrolment, with low levels of school attendance, particularly among girls. Of note is what types of school these children attend. In Mirpur Sakro as a whole more than three-quarters of active students attend a government school (77%) rather than a private school (23%); a very small number attend a religious school (madrassas 0.1%). These figures are consistent between boys and girls, however there is a wide division between urban and rural areas. In urban communities more than half of children attend a private school, whereas fewer than one in six do so in rural areas (53% versus 15%). Later in this report we explore the availability of and preferences for government and private schools in Mirpur Sakro, to understand what may drive this pattern.

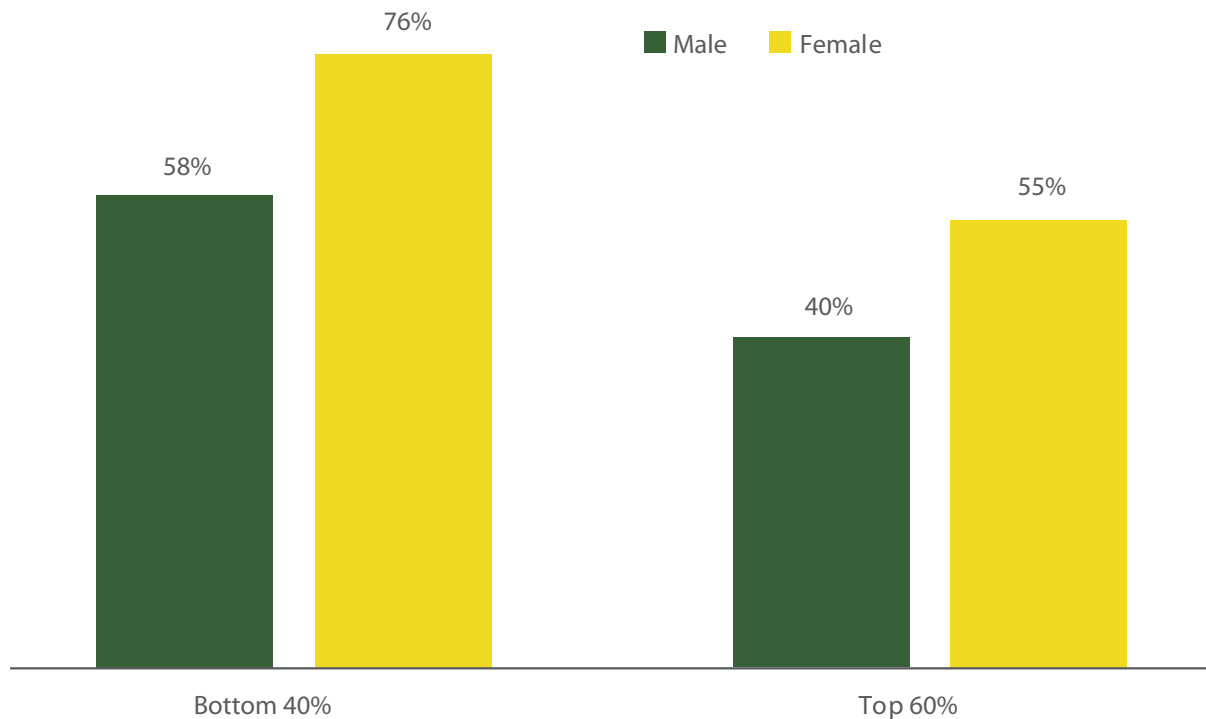
Table 7: School attendance in UC Mirpur Sakro

Status		Area		Gender		Total
		Rural	Urban	Male	Female	
Number of children aged 5-16 years		2,001	511	1,297	1,215	2,512
School attendance history	Never attended	48%	48%	41%	56%	48%
	Attended school but dropped out	11%	7%	10%	11%	10%
	Currently attending	41%	45%	49%	33%	42%
Number of children aged 5-16 years in school		781	220	625	376	1001
School type currently attended	Government	85%	47%	77%	76%	77%
	Private	15%	53%	22%	24%	23%
	Deeni madrasa	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014.

When evaluating data about schooling in District Thatta we are interested both in what attracts children to school, and what barriers prevent them from attending. We hypothesise that one of the latter factors may be household income, therefore in Mirpur Sakro we collected data on each household's asset score¹¹ as a proxy indicator of economic status. When comparing the bottom 40% of households¹² with the rest of the population, all poorer children are more disadvantaged, particularly the three-quarters of girls who are out of school (76%). These statistics highlight the importance of focusing on the poorest communities and households in District Thatta although, as discussed in the next section, poverty is not the only factor inhibiting enrolment.

Figure 3: Profile of out-of-school children by asset index and gender in UC Mirpur Sakro



Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

NON-ENROLMENT IN SCHOOL

Within UC Mirpur Sakro we asked parents of those children who had never been to school, why this was the case. Their answers should be treated with caution as they present a snapshot of parents' own perception and rationale for their children not attending schools.

Parents are most likely to claim that their child has never attended school due to the child's own lack of interest (26%) or not being able to obtain permission from the child's father or elders in the family (17%). These reasons should not be linked with the assumption that there is a lack of demand for education. Instead this should be linked with the parents' reluctance to expose their children to the adverse conditions of schools and the hostility of the public sector toward the prospects of a quality education for those that cannot afford expensive private school systems. The majority of government schools lack basic facilities such as clean drinking water, bathrooms and boundary walls. In many areas, the long journey to school is difficult if not impossible in the absence of safe and reliable transportation. Therefore, a parent's "consent" is a safety issue, and a child's lack of interest, is an issue of natural self-preservation. These represent failures of the government school systems to provide safety, security and essential facilities in schools rather than the amorphous bogeyman of "cultural factors" so often used as a crutch by governments not doing their jobs.

11. Alif Ailaan. 2014. 25 million broken promises: the crisis of Pakistan's out-of-school children.

12. SEMIS school census, 2013-14; SEMIS provides enrolment data for government schools only.

Table 8: Reasons for child never enrolling in school (UC Mirpur Sakro)

Reasons for not attending school	Gender of child		Area		Household income*		Total
	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Bottom 40%	Top 60%	
Child is not interested in going to school	29%	23%	26%	25%	26%	26%	26%
Father or elders do not allow child to go to school	15%	19%	16%	22%	8%	34%	17%
The school is too far from home	9%	8%	9%	7%	10%	6%	9%
Girls should not go to school	2%	13%	10%	3%	9%	6%	8%
Poverty	8%	6%	4%	17%	8%	6%	7%
Teachers are not in school	8%	6%	8%	2%	10%	2%	7%
There is no school in this area	5%	6%	6%	5%	7%	4%	6%
Child is too young	6%	4%	5%	5%	6%	4%	5%
The school is closed	6%	4%	6%	1%	5%	5%	5%
There is no education in the school	3%	3%	3%	1%	3%	1%	3%
Child was not admitted to school	3%	3%	2%	7%	3%	4%	3%
Child needed in household to work	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Child is ill	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Education is not important	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Corporal punishment is a problem	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%

* Using asset index as proxy

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014.

Base: All parents of out-of-school children who have never been enrolled.

Further evidence of the supply-side failure and the inaccuracy of “demand” as being an explanation for low enrolment and high dropouts are the reasons given that garner very low responses. “Education is not important” is the response of 1%, “Girls should not go to school” is the response of only 8%, and “Child needed in household to work” is the response of only 2%. The problem therefore, by definition is not “attitudinal”. The problem is provisional. Pakistani government institutions have not provided Pakistani society with the tools to enable its citizens to get an education.

Distance to school (9%), teacher absence (7%) and a general lack of schools in the area (6%) are some of the other barriers mentioned by the parents. The pattern of answers is broadly similar between urban and rural communities, and across household incomes, implying that there is no one 'golden hurdle' that must be overcome to increase the student population within particular sub-groups.

DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

Around one in ten children in Mirpur Sakro once attended school but have since dropped out. The sample size of this group in the SSO survey is relatively small, a total of 258 children, but the indicative findings show that the reasons for dropping out are broadly similar to those for never enrolling: a failure of supply. It is noteworthy that 17% of the children dropped out because of the teachers' unavailability in schools.

Table 9: Reasons for dropping out of school (UC Mirpur Sakro)

Reason	Gender		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Child is not interested in going to school	24%	14%	19%
Work	7%	3%	5%
Girls do not study	2%	9%	6%
Father/ elders not allow	2%	12%	7%
Poverty	15%	16%	16%
School is closed	14%	3%	9%
School is far from the area	1%	3%	2%
Corporal punishment	7%	6%	6%
Teachers are not available	13%	21%	17%
There is no education in school	8%	6%	7%
There is no school available	4%	7%	6%
Do not go due to illness	2%	0%	1%

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014.

Base: All parents of out-of-school children who had previously been enrolled.

DISTANCE TO SCHOOL

A further indication of the allure of private schools may come in the time taken to travel to and from school. The average travel time to a private school is 19 minutes, compared with 13 minutes for a government school. There is a risk of a syllogistic assumption here, since private schools account for a higher share of enrolment in urban areas and most private schools are in urban areas, nevertheless there is a willingness to travel further to private schools.

Table 10: Average travel time to school in UC Mirpur Sakro

Characteristics of students		Commuting time (round trip) from home to school	
		Mean minutes	Number of students
Gender	Male	15	568
	Female	13	366
Area	Rural	12	715
	Urban	21	222
Household income	Bottom 40%	14	434
	Top 60%	15	503
Type of school	Government	13	680
	Private	19	217
Overall average		14	898

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

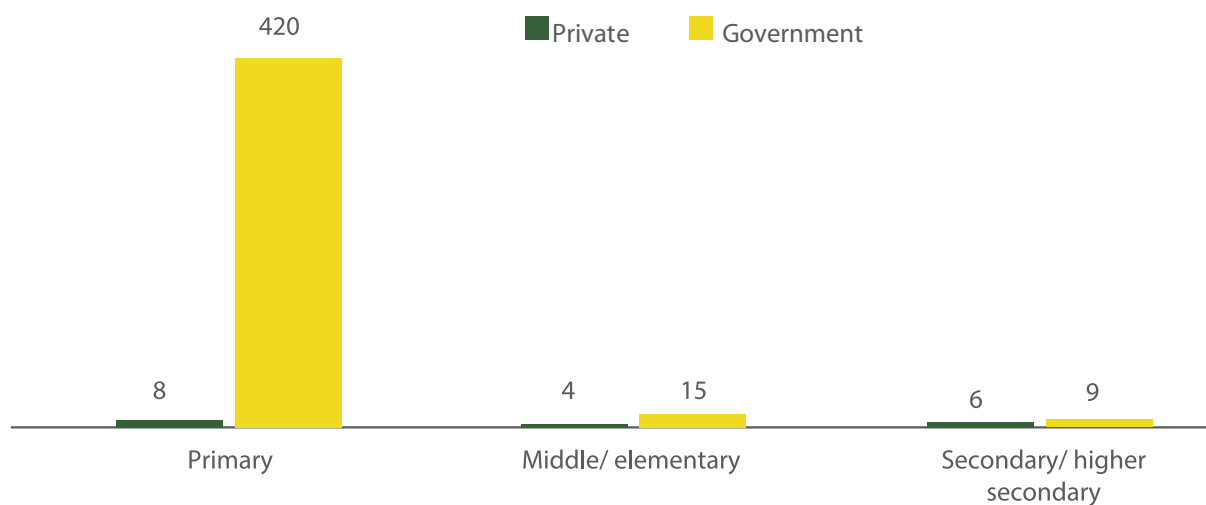
SCHOOLING PROVISION AND ENVIRONMENT

Enrolment is a function of several factors including the provision of schools, teacher attendance, and parental perceptions of the availability and quality of education. This section provides a unique assessment of these factors within District Thatta, across both government and private school systems.

SCHOOL PROVISION

In the eight union councils covered by the RSPN household and schooling census, we adopted a unique perspective that covered both government and private school systems. Of the 462 schools identified in these areas, just 18 are private schools. Of these private schools, half are primary and half middle or secondary schools; the government provides twenty six middle and secondary schools. The government is therefore the dominant supplier of primary education in these eight union councils, and almost all of its school provision focuses on primary education. This is verified by SEMIS data, in which 93% of government schooling is at the primary level.

Figure 4: Number of schools by level in selected eight union councils of District Thatta



Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan school census, 2014

This mix of schooling provision is broadly consistent across the eight union councils in which we conducted a census. The only notable difference is within Haji Ghirano, which is the only area in which there are four madrassas but no private schools.

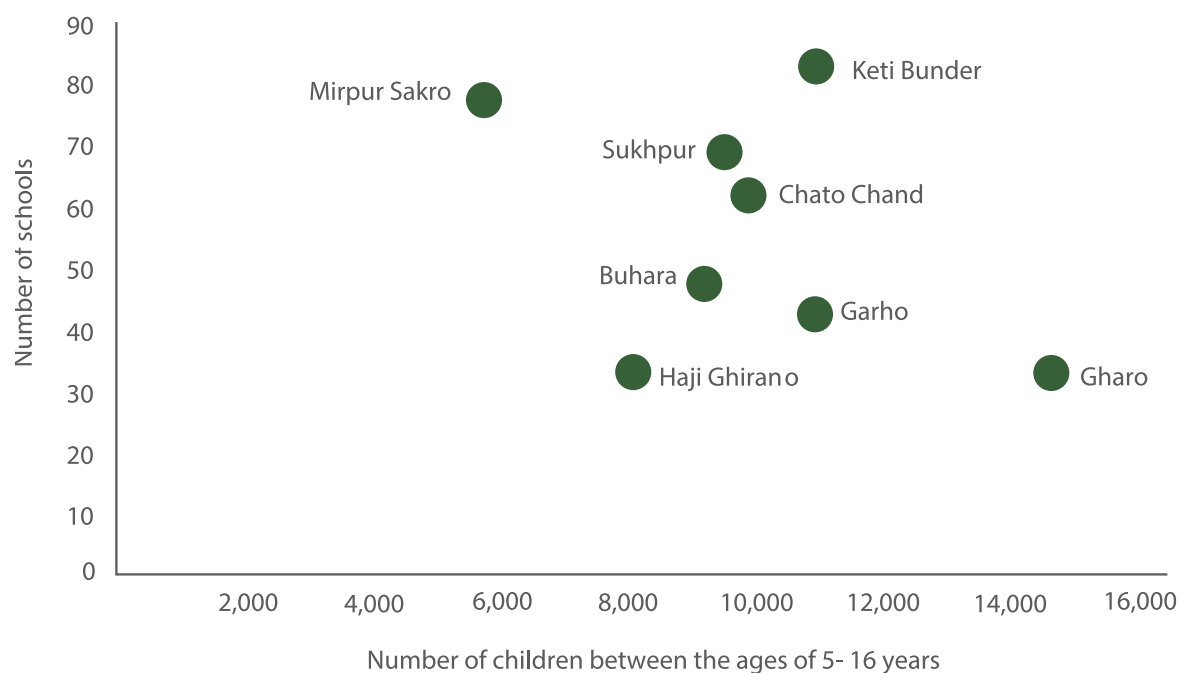
Table 11: Provision of schools by type within selected eight union councils of District Thatta

Union Council	Number of schools (all levels)		
	Private	Public	Madrassa
Buhara	2	47	0
Chato Chand	1	62	0
Garho	1	42	0
Gharo	3	32	0
Haji Ghirano	0	32	4
Keti Bunder	2	83	0
Mirpur Sakro	8	77	0
Sukhpur	1	69	0
Total	18	444	4
	4%	95%	1%

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan school census, 2014

Looking in more depth at the data, it becomes clear that there is a mismatch between school provision and student need. When mapping RSPN census data on school provision and the number of children between the ages of 5-16 years in each union council we find that Gharo, the UC with the largest number children has the smallest share of available schools; and that Mirpur Sakro is the area with the largest school provision but the smallest number of children (Figure 5). Despite caveats such as assumptions about schools being the same size and teachers attending, it is evident that solving the education problem in District Thatta is not as simple as enrolling more children in school. If this happened in Gharo, the already crowded schools would be under even greater pressure. Meanwhile there may be oversupply or spare capacity in UC Mirpur Sakro and UC Keti Bunder.

Figure 5: School provision versus demand in selected eight union councils of District Thatta



UC name	Buhara	Chhato Chand	Garho	Gharo	Haji Girhano	Keti Bunder	Mirpur Sakro	Sukhpur
Number of government schools	47	62	42	32	32	83	77	69
Number of children (5-16 years old)	9,309	9,912	10,972	14,734	8,136	11,020	5,781	9,500

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan household and school census, 2014

Enrolment is a function of several factors. Not only must we consider school provision, but also how parents perceive different types of schooling. Looking in more detail at parental opinion in Mirpur Sakro, table 12 shows whether parents are aware of each type of school available in their area and, if so, their rating of the quality of each type of school in general. Among those that express an opinion it is evident that private and madrassa schools are rated much more positively than government schools.

Table 12: Availability and perceptions of different types of schools in UC Mirpur Sakro

	Type of school		
	Government	Private	Madrassa
School not available in the area	6%	66%	62%
Quality of schooling			
Very good	22%	23%	26%
Fairly good	20%	3%	8%
Fairly poor	15%	<1%	1%
Very poor	31%	<1%	<1%
Don't know	6%	7%	3%
Net good*	-4	+25	+44
Total	100%	100%	100%

* Net good = % 'good' minus % 'poor'

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

SCHOOL OPERATION

To increase enrolment in District Thatta, not only must we consider the provision and perception of different types of schooling, but also whether these schools are actually functioning. SEMIS data reports that of District Thatta's 1,538 government schools, only 77% are functional (i.e. permanently open), with a further 4% closed temporarily and 19% closed permanently. Of the latter, nine in ten closures (89%) were attributed to a lack of teachers.

Table 13: Functional schools in selected eight union councils of District Thatta

Union council	Number / proportion	Status	
		Functional	Non-functional
Buhara	n	17	30
	%	36%	64%
Chato Chand	n	58	4
	%	94%	6%
Garho	n	23	19
	%	55%	45%
Gharo	n	26	6
	%	81%	19%
Haji Ghirano	n	13	19
	%	41%	59%
Keti Bunder	n	19	64
	%	23%	77%
Mirpur Sakro	n	38	39
	%	49%	51%
Sukhpur	n	37	32
	%	54%	46%
Total	n	231	213
	%	52%	48%

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan school census, 2014

Our work with RSPN in eight union councils paints a considerably worse picture: almost half (48%) of government schools were closed. In Keti Bunder as many as three-quarters of schools (77%) are non-functioning. Every private school in the census is open.

SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Even if schools are open, many lack basic infrastructure and facilities to ensure safety and comfort for children. SEMIS reports that only 78% of government schools in District Thatta have a boundary wall, 50% have toilets, 30% water and just 20% electricity. The RSPN census of eight union councils finds that conditions on the ground are much worse than this. For example whilst private schools have a high level of provision of most facilities, less than half of government schools have a boundary wall (41%), undermining security which is a significant inhibitor to school attendance, particularly for girls.

Table 14: Provision of infrastructure by school type in selected eight UCs of District Thatta

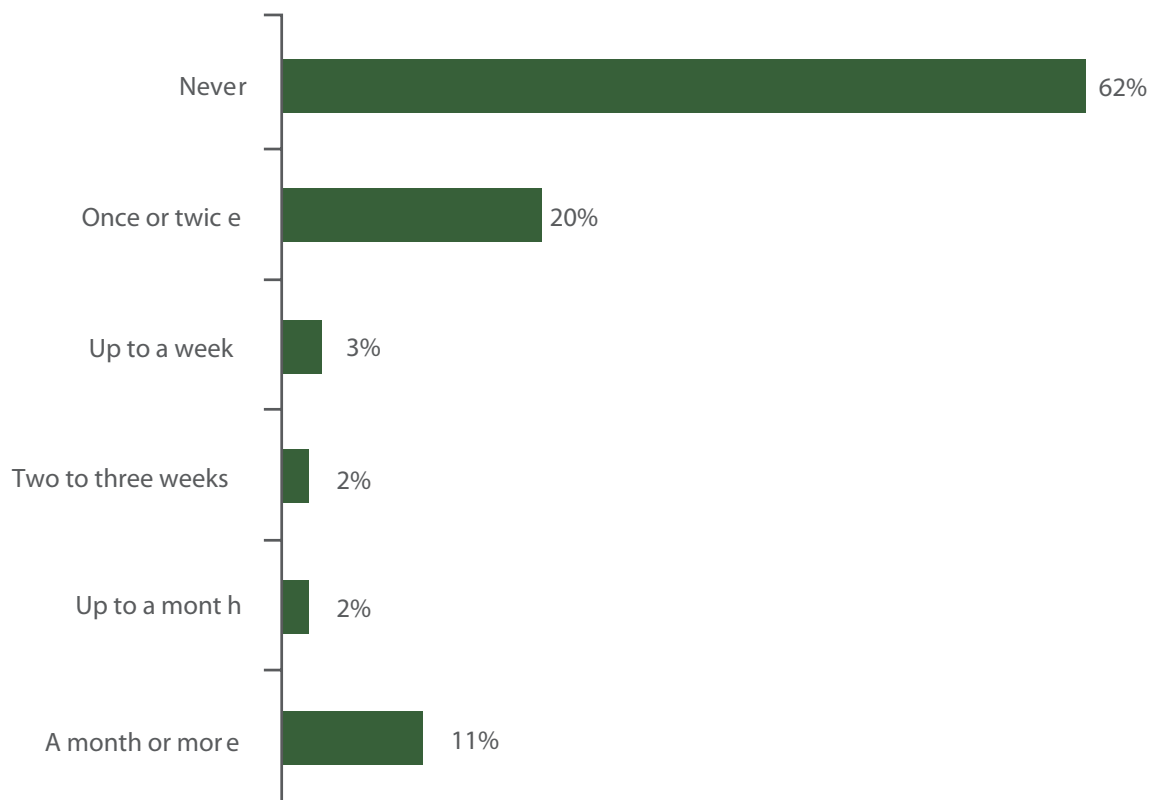
Union Council		Drinking water available	Electricity available	Toilets available	School boundary wall	School main gate	Sewerage
Buhara	Private, n=2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Government	75%	19%	75%	19%	19%	6%
Chato Chand	Private, n=1	1	0	1	0	1	1
	Government	47%	16%	63%	72%	50%	22%
Garho	Private, n=1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Government	64%	9%	55%	23%	14%	5%
Gharo	Private, n=3	1	3	3	2	3	3
	Government	35%	9%	61%	39%	35%	26%
Haji Ghirano	Government	38%	8%	69%	23%	23%	0%
Keti Bunder	Private, n=2	1	0	1	0	0	0
	Government	16%	16%	68%	47%	37%	0%
Mirpur Sakro	Private, n=8	6	6	7	7	6	5
	Government	53%	23%	50%	45%	23%	13%
Sukhpur	Private, n=1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Government	64%	22%	53%	36%	22%	8%
Overall	Private, n=18	13	12	15	12	13	12
	Government	50%	16%	59%	41%	28%	11%

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan school census, 2014

PARENTS' OPINIONS OF SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

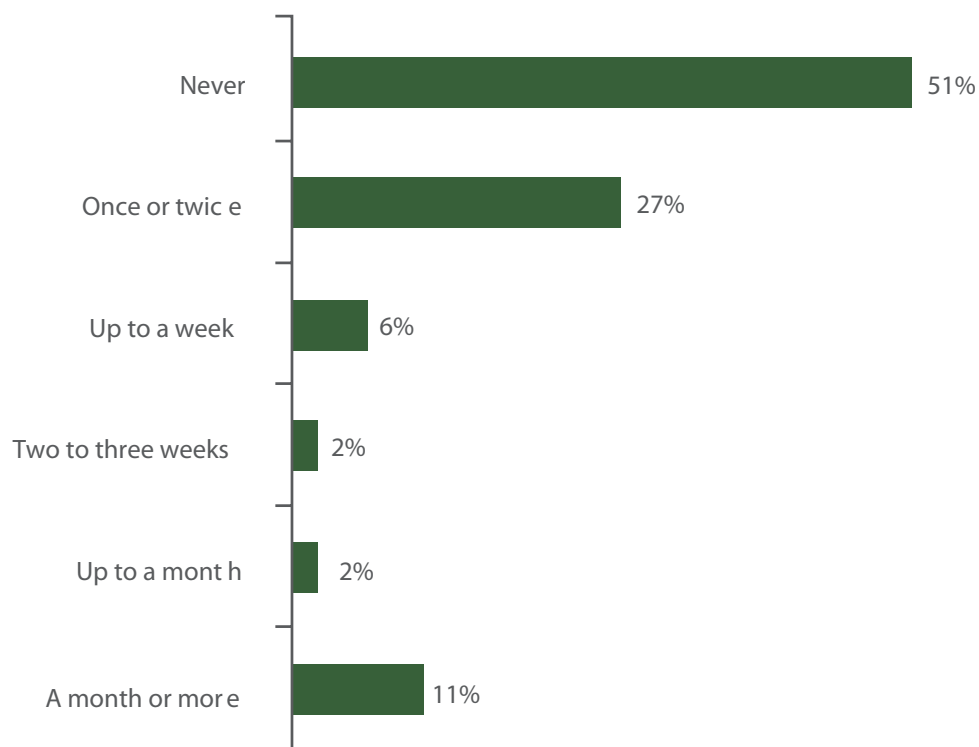
Perhaps the most important driver of a parent's choice whether to enrol their child is their perception of the standard of school provision, which may not match the reality. In our survey of Mirpur Sakro we asked parents what they think of the standard of schooling and teaching in their area. Their reports align with the survey from the RSPN school census: fewer than one in six said their local government school was closed for a week or more in the past year (15%), and around one in ten said that teachers were absent from their local government school for a month or more in the past year.

Figure 6: Parental reporting of school closures in UC Mirpur Sakro



Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

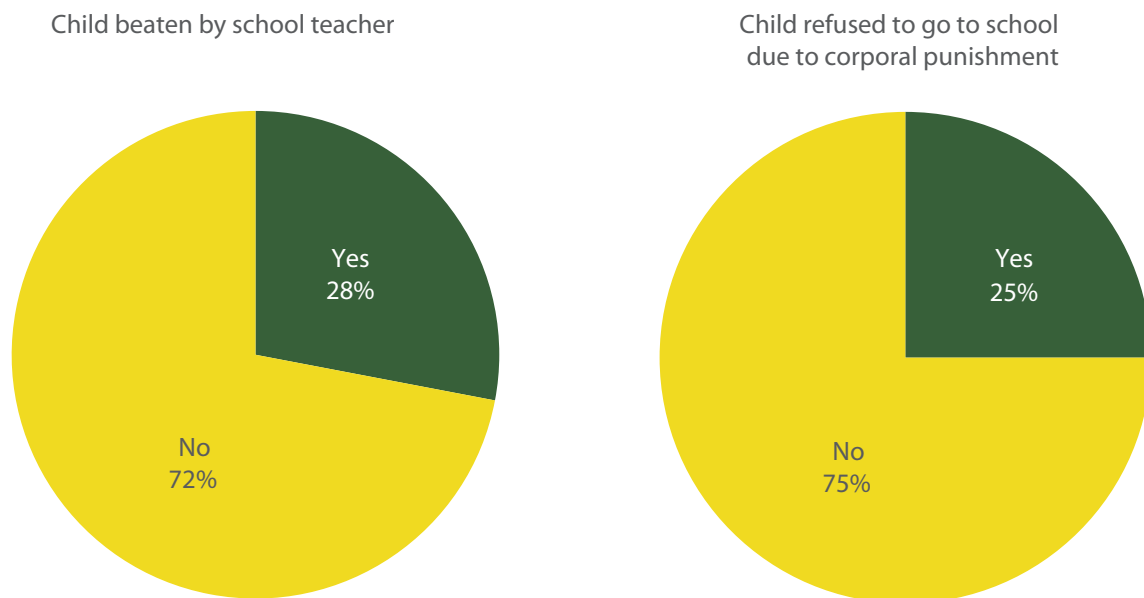
Figure 7: Parental reporting of teacher absence in UC Mirpur Sakro



Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

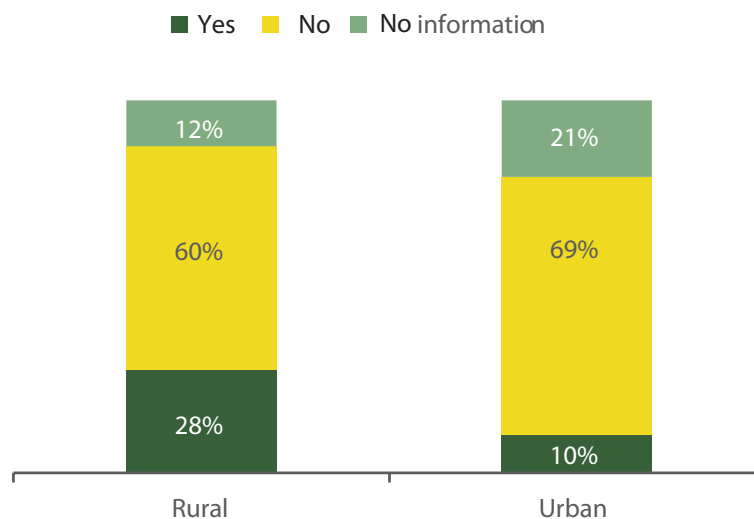
We also asked parents about their child's experience of corporal punishment, which is known to have a negative impact on school attendance and educational outcomes. In Mirpur Sakro more than a quarter of parents said their child had been beaten by his or her teacher at school (28%), and a similar number said that their child didn't want to go to school because of corporal punishment. Change in the behaviour as well as the attendance of teachers will be important to increase the enrolment rate in District Thatta.

Figure 8: Parental reporting of corporal punishment in UC Mirpur Sakro



Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

Figure 9: Corporal punishment in urban and rural areas of UC Mirpur Sakro



Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

EDUCATION OUTCOMES

The standard of education outcomes in District Thatta is poor, with younger children in urban government schools recording particularly poor results.

Data on education outcomes is limited in both detail and the number of students assessed, further complicated by a lack of standardised measures between government and private schools. The best data available on government schooling are from the Sindh Standardised Achievement Test (SAT), administered annually by the provincial government. The test is administered to grades five and eight, intended to measure the quality of learning in mathematics, science and languages (English, Urdu and Sindhi). The relatively small number of students taking part in this test limits the depth in which the results can be analysed, for example for differences between different types of government schools; nevertheless District Thatta's poor performance is evident. It is ranked thirteenth of twenty-three¹³ districts for students at grade five, and sixteenth at grade eight – and Sindh itself is already one of the worst performing provinces in the Alif Ailaan District Education Rankings. One statistically significant difference is between rural and urban areas at grade five, where urban areas record notably lower average scores.

Table 15: Average SAT scores (%) in District Thatta

Class		Sindh Average	District Thatta				
			Total	Girls	Boys	Rural	Urban
Five	n	129,026	469	107	316	360	109
	%	21%	19%	20%	24%	23%	14%
Eight	n	96,546	691	201	394	536	155
	%	23%	21%	25%	26%	24%	25%

Source: Standardised Achievement Test (SAT)-Sindh, 2013-14

13. SAT was not administered in newly formed Sujawal district, and Karachi was treated as one district.

NUTRITION AND EDUCATION

Sindh has the worst levels of malnutrition in Pakistan, among girls and boys, with diets for both mother and child lacking many of the nutrients essential for healthy development. This impacts school attendance and learning outcomes.

There is global agreement that nutrition has a significant influence on learning outcomes, especially the adverse impact of low birth weight and the type of food consumed by infants and children. Malnourished children are more likely to have lower IQs, score lower on numeracy and literacy tests, and be in a lower grade than appropriate for their age. Malnutrition leads to school dropouts, with a 10% increase in malnutrition leading to an average 8% increase in the proportion of children who drop out of school¹⁴. A child's nutrition is also impacted significantly by the nutrition of his/her mother during pregnancy and lactation.

In Pakistan, malnutrition is an endemic problem that is causing developmental challenges in children. Pakistan has the world's third highest number of stunted and wasted children under the age of five¹⁵. More than one in three of all Pakistani children under the age of five are underweight, and nearly half are stunted¹⁶. Despite such alarming figures, the trend has remained stagnant over the past fifty years, suggesting that little is being done to fix these problems.

Sindh is the lowest among provinces and territories in Pakistan on every measure of nutrition: 57% of Sindh's children are stunted, 42% underweight and 16% are suffering from wasting

Table 16: Status of malnutrition in Pakistan

Province	Underweight	Stunting	Wasting
	(low weight for age)	(low height for age)	(low weight for height)
Sindh	42%	57%	16%
Balochistan*	40%	52%	14%
KP	26%	42%	13%
Punjab	26%	40%	12%
GB	14%	36%	10%
ICT	13%	22%	8%
Pakistan	30%	45%	11%
UC Mirpur Sakro	37%	61%	25%

Source: Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey, 2012-13; Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014; Data for Balochistan is extracted from National Nutrition Survey, 2011.

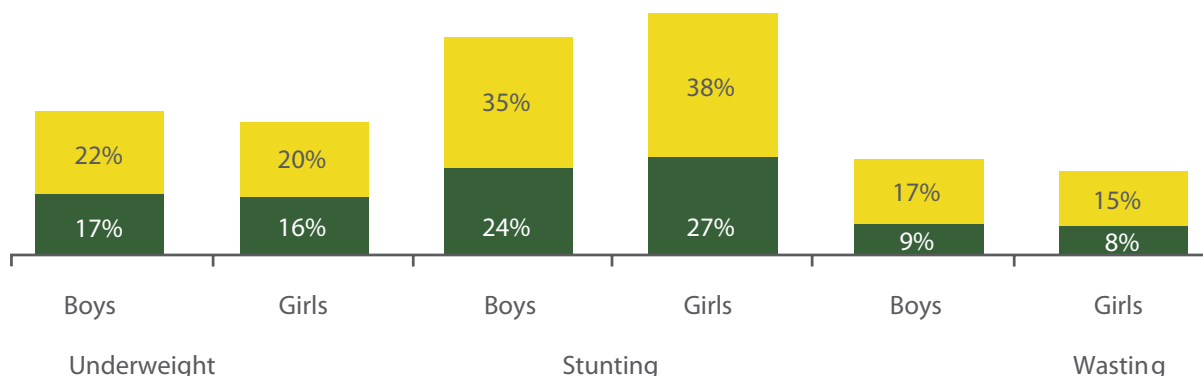
These provincial figures are often worse at the union council levels. In Mirpur Sakro, an alarming number of children under the age of five years suffer from malnutrition. Our household survey in this union council finds that six in ten are suffering from stunting (61%); more than a third are underweight (37%); and around a quarter show signs of wasting (25%). Levels are broadly similar between boys and girls. However, in case of stunting girls are more disadvantaged, a quarter of girls (27%) and boys (24%) are severely stunted, i.e. under-height for their age.

14. Grantham McGregor, et al., (2007). Child Development in Developing Countries 1: Developmental Potential in the first 5 years for Children in Developing Countries, The Lancet, 369, 60-70, excerpts from p.63.

15. UNICEF, (2013). Improving child nutrition. The achievable imperative for global progress. http://www.childinfo.org/files/NutritionReport_April2013_Final.pdf (Pg-90).

16. Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey, 2012-13

Figure 10: Malnutrition among children in UC Mirpur Sakro

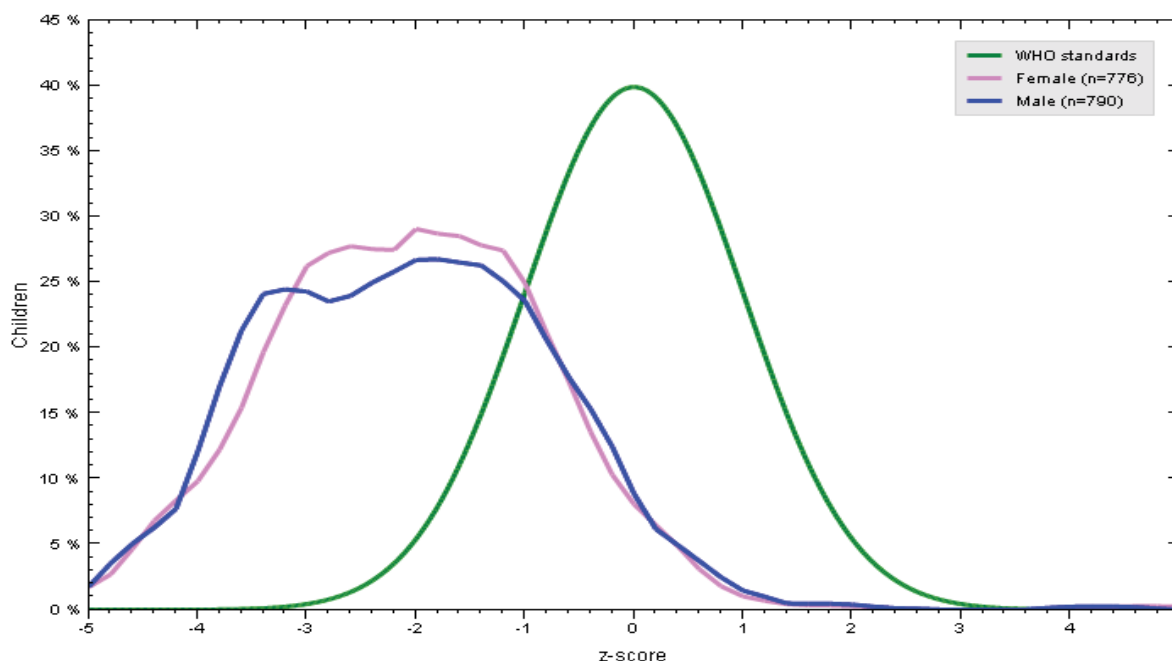


Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

MID-UPPER ARM CIRCUMFERENCE DATA

Anthropometric data is a useful indicator of health and nutritional habits in Mirpur Sakro. The Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) of children in each surveyed household has been calculated to estimate malnutrition among children (aged below five years)¹⁷. The pattern of MUAC data in Mirpur Sakro shows that malnutrition is commonplace among children (aged 3 year or under), with a mean MUAC in the area well below the mean World Health Organisation (WHO) standard measurement for both boys and girls.

Figure 11: Mean MUAC among children in UC Mirpur Sakro, versus WHO standard



Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

17. The methodology is explained in Annex 1

The nutritional status of the population is contingent upon eating and drinking habits; for infants and children, the health status of new-born also depends on the nutrition and eating/ drinking habits of their mothers when they were pregnant or lactating. Our survey in Mirpur Sakro collected information about the eating and drinking habits of children, and of pregnant and lactating women, to give a fuller picture of poor nutrition in children.

In both urban and rural communities, pregnant and lactating women are using too much gutka¹⁸ in the morning, in between and after meals – a snack that can have detrimental health effects for these women and their children. At meals, these women usually eat roti, daal and drink water, followed by meat (chicken, beef or fish). A lack of milk, fruits and vegetables is noticeable in their diets. Tea is also a common drink taken in between meals.

Table 17: Food consumed by pregnant and lactating women in UC Mirpur Sakro

Food type*	Pregnant			Lactating			All women surveyed		
	Breakfast %	Lunch %	Dinner %	Breakfast %	Lunch %	Dinner %	Breakfast %	Lunch %	Dinner %
Processed food	21.3	0.0	0.0	20.5	0.0	0.2	20.8	0.0	0.1
Egg	0.0	0.0	2.4	1.3	1.5	2.7	0.9	1.0	2.6
Gutka	15.6	2.7	5.2	17.7	5.3	5.4	16.9	4.3	5.3
Halwa	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.1
Milk	1.5	10.9	11.6	1.2	10.3	11.1	1.3	10.5	11.3
Roti/ Bread	62.9	79.4	84.5	60.9	83.4	90.9	61.6	82.0	88.6
Meat	0.0	30.9	28.6	0.5	33.2	29.6	0.3	32.4	29.2
Vegetables	0.3	6.1	4.0	0.2	7.1	4.4	0.2	6.7	4.2
Daal/ Pulses	0.3	42.	38.3	0.2	36.8	38.9	0.2	38.8	38.7
Rice	0.0	18.5	14.9	0.2	9.0	9.8	0.1	12.4	11.6
Fruits	0.0	1.5	1.8	0.0	1.4	1.4	0.0	1.4	1.5
Tea	96.7	1.8	4.3	96.3	2.2	3.7	96.4	2.1	3.9
Water	34.7	48.5	58.4	23.4	40.7	56.6	27.5	43.5	57.2
Other	0.3	0.6	1.8	0.7	2.5	1.7	0.5	1.8	1.7

*As measured in 24 hours before the interview took place

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

18. gutka is a preparation of crushed areca nut, tobacco, catechu, paraffin wax, slaked lime and sweet or savory flavorings.

While nutritional habits of pregnant and lactating women will have an indirect impact on the educational outcomes of their children, the eating and drinking habits of children have a more direct and immediate impact. In Mirpur Sakro children's diets include milk, bread (roti) and lentils (daal). At breakfast a small number of children also consume gutka which can be harmful. A large proportion of children drink tea at breakfast as well. Meat-based proteins are largely missing from children's diets, with lunch and dinner comprising of lentils, roti, rice, and water. Results show no gender bias in eating habits.

Table 18: Food consumed by children under three years of age in UC Mirpur Sakro

Food type*	Breakfast			Lunch			Dinner		
	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female	Overall
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Processed food	32	33	33	1	1	1	2	2	2
Egg	1	1	1	1	.4	1	2	3	2
Gutka	6	6	6	<1	<1	<1	0	1	0
Halwa	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Milk	21	19	20	22	19	20	33	35	34
Roti/ Bread	36	35	36	62	63	63	56	56	56
Meat	0	0	0	10	9	10	11	10	11
Vegetables	0	0	0	24	24	24	15	15	15
Daal/Pulses	0	0	0	29	32	30	26	25	25
Rice	0	0	0	13	13	13	13	14	13
Fruits	0	0	0	.3	.3	0	.3	.1	.2
Juices	0	0	0	5	8	7	.1	0	.1
Tea	75	78	77	3	2	2	6	5	5
Water	18	17	18	36	39	37	30	32	31
Others	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2

*As measured in 24 hours before the interview took place.

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014.

CONCLUSIONS

This report pulls together data from several sources that address the demographic, education and nutritional statistics of District Thatta, with special on one of its Union Councils, Mirpur Sakro. It has highlighted the disparities in educational outcomes across genders, geographies and incomes, and assesses the factors that help explain poor education outcomes. The report draws number of conclusions that should be of concern and interest to policy makers in Karachi and in Islamabad, and to decision-makers in District Thatta itself.

Interplay of poverty, residence and gender: Differences at the local level, between and within union councils, are most pronounced along the lines of urban and rural residence. There is a significant gap between rural and urban communities in terms of both enrolment and learning outcomes. The picture is not always simple: for example Gharo despite having the lowest number of schools, has reached gender parity in school enrolment and has the highest enrolment of five to sixteen year olds across the eight local areas surveyed. Meanwhile Mirpur Sakro has the highest number of government and private schools, yet is two steps behind Gharo in overall enrolment and further behind in gender parity. Data on demand for and provision of education varies between union councils, emphasising the need for a differentiated approach in every location. Our surveys with parents report, in line with PSLM national surveys, that the most frequent reason for children not being in school is their 'lack of interest': there is a need for further research to better understand if this is linked to the hostile environment of the schools due to poor infrastructure, teacher absenteeism and corporal punishment.

Service delivery issues: In general, private schools are perceived to be of higher quality than public schools despite being negligible in number and requiring a longer commute time. The school census data we collected showed that private schools are distinctly better than government schools for several reasons including teachers' continued presence and the provision of functional amenities. It emerged from the analysis that in District Thatta a high proportion of government schools are rendered non-functional mostly due to a lack of availability of teachers. This could be driving the more positive perception of private schools among parents. Our primary data showed that SEMIS reports are not completely accurate and might be used to cover up inadequate performances. The percentage of non-functional schools vary from 5% to 75% among the eight areas surveyed in this study but, due to a lack of private schools, government schooling often remains the only choice. Less teacher absenteeism and improvements in school infrastructure would allow more children to enrol in government schools.

Nutrition: Mirpur Sakro has alarmingly high levels of malnutrition among its children and poor nutrition among pregnant and lactating women. Nutrition plays an important role in fostering enrolment and improving learning outcomes, as unhealthy children make poor students. The eating habits of women during pregnancy and lactation impact the development of children leading to stunting, malnutrition and even wasting. The eating habits appear to be affected both by poverty levels and by a lack of awareness about healthy lifestyles and balanced meals. Consumption of gutka is detrimental to health and a significant proportion of women consume it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Concentrated efforts are needed to reach every union council, and each presents a different challenge. This calls for the adoption of a differentiated and targeted approach that addresses both supply and demand side constraints.

The seemingly enormous challenge of getting children to school, helping them and their parents overcome the fears of low quality infrastructure, corporal punishment and other factors can be tackled only through the provision of better products and services by government. If there is not a dramatic improvement in the quality of education provided in government schools, Pakistan will continue to struggle to enrol and retain students in government schools. Parents who choose to keep their children at home are in fact voting with their feet and crying out for help: "We can't afford private schools, and we won't subject our children to dangerous and poor quality government schools."

Despite that generic reality, education reform has to seek local solutions to local problems, rather than treating an issue like out of school children as a homogenous whole throughout the country or across an entire province. Reform must strive to enrol more students, reduce gender gaps and guard against early drop outs. A locally developed programme in Mirpur Sakro would, therefore, need to solve various complex and difficult issues. It would need to address urban and rural factors responsible for out-of-school children separately and sensitively, as poverty appears to play a role alongside urban-rural disparity. The programme would also need to target the access and availability of schools. However, it is important to note that to improve future educational outcomes in Mirpur Sakro, focus will be required not only on those factors that directly impact education, such as quality and access of schooling, but also on improving health indicators. Bundling health or nutrition programmes with education will enhance human development outcomes. Information must be imparted to expectant and new mothers about healthy eating and drinking habits and its significance to the future health and development of their children, particularly the long term benefits of the link between improved nutrition and education.

ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGY FOR THE COLLECTION OF NUTRITIONAL AND ANTHROPOMETRY DATA

Nutritional and anthropometric (body size) information was collected during the interviews from all pregnant and lactating women, and from children less than five years old. Respondents explicitly consented to the collection of this information.

Mothers were asked to recall all meals taken in the previous twenty four hours, including what was eaten, how often it was eaten and the quantity consumed. Age, height, weight and middle-upper arm circumference (MUAC) were then measured:

- Age – the ages of all adults and children under five in the household were recorded
- Height – each participant stood with their back and head against a wall or poll and their leg joints straightened. Their height was marked on the wall or poll, and then measured in centimetres using a standard tape.
- Weight – each participant was weighed in kilograms using standard portable scales, set at zero kilograms
- MUAC – middle-upper arm circumference was measured in centimetres using colour-coded bands

Figure 12: Measurement collection



ANNEX 2: SAMPLE PROFILE OF SSO HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

Mirpur Sakro has a predominantly young and poorly educated population. More than half (57%) of residents are under 17 years old, and three quarters are illiterate (73%). The average household size of 7.5 people is larger than the Sindh overall average of 6.55. Households in both rural (7.64) and urban (7.05) areas are above this Sindh average.

Table 19: Profile of the sample population UC Mirpur Sakro

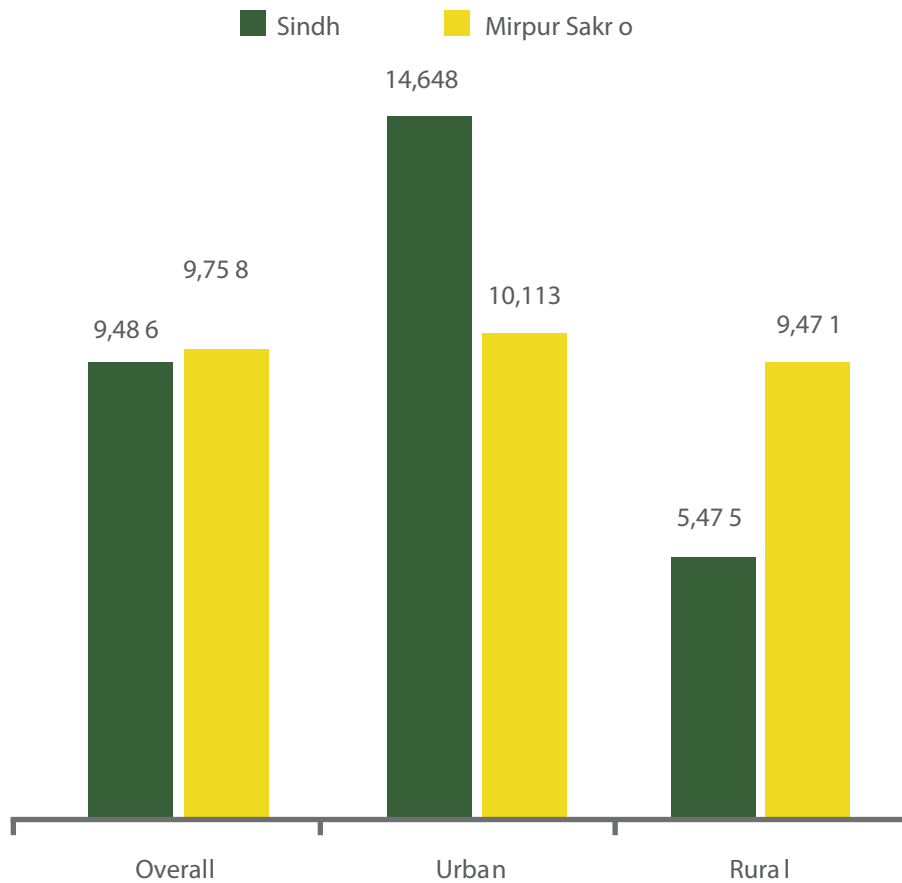
Variable	Category	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Sample size (all members of the household)		4,046	3,950	7,996
Age groups	0-4 years	21.4%	21.4%	21.4%
	5-16 years	35.5%	35.3%	35.4%
	17+ years	43.1%	43.3%	43.2%
Sample size (age 10+ years)		1,983	1,838	3,821
Can read and write in any language with sufficient understanding (among those aged 10+ years)	Literate	38%	14%	27%
	Illiterate	62%	86%	73%

Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

The average household income in Mirpur Sakro is Rs. 9,758 per month, on par with the overall Sindh average monthly household income of Rs. 9,486. The gap between average incomes in rural and urban communities is smaller than across the province¹⁹ as a whole, with rural incomes a little higher and urban incomes a little lower than the provincial trend.

19. Household Income and Economic Survey, 2011-12.

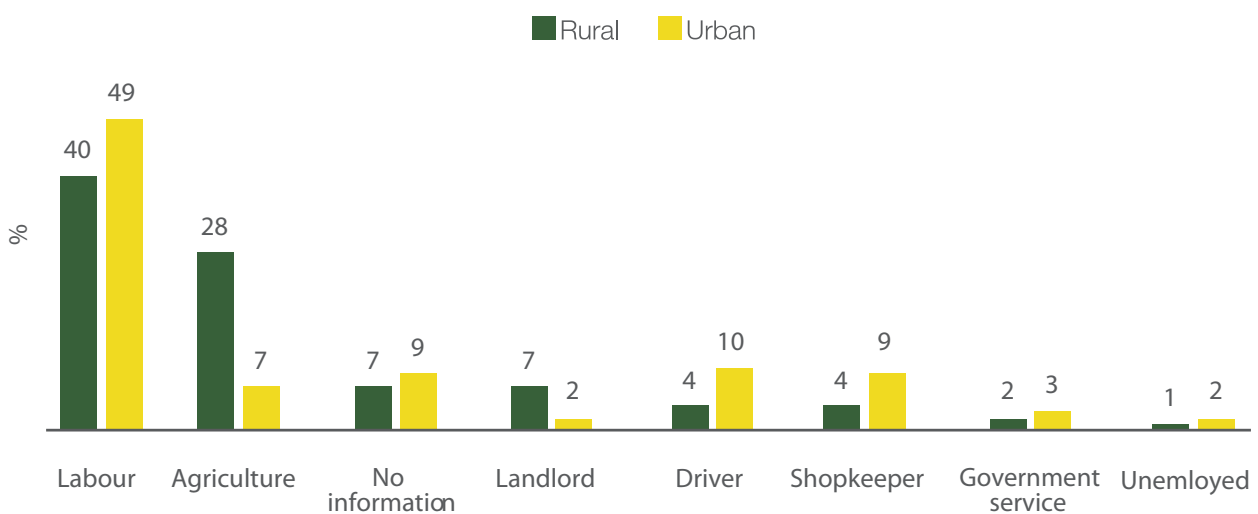
Figure 13: Average monthly income in UC Mirpur Sakro (in rupees)



Source: Pakistan Social Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM) 2013-14; Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

Heads of household in Mirpur Sakro are most likely to be day labourers or involved in agriculture, the latter more likely in rural areas.

Figure 14: Occupation of the head of household in Mirpur Sakro



Source: Sehatmand Sindh Organisation and Alif Ailaan household survey, 2014

ANNEX 3: DETAILED DATA TABLES

Table 20: Schooling status of children in the selected eight UCs of District Thatta

Category		Union Council								Total
		Buhara	Chato Chand	Garho	Gharo	Haji Ghirano	Keti Bunder	Mirpur Sakro	Sukhpur	
Girls	Total	4,189	4,699	5,046	7,158	3,575	5,259	2,575	4,357	36,858
	In school	658	1,436	831	3,957	972	1,216	1,012	741	10,823
	OOS	3,531	3,263	4,215	3,201	2,603	4,043	1,563	3,616	26,035
Boys	Total	5,120	5,213	5,926	7,576	4,561	5,761	3,206	5,143	42,506
	In school	1,316	2,359	1,406	4,095	1,366	1,868	1,599	1,343	15,352
	OOS	3,804	2,854	4,520	3,481	3,195	3,893	1,607	3,800	27,154
All children	Total	9,309	9,912	10,972	14,734	8,136	11,020	5,781	9,500	79,364
	In school	1,974	3,795	2,237	8,052	2,338	3,084	2,611	2,084	26,175
	OOS	7,335	6,117	8,735	6,682	5,798	7,936	3,170	7,416	53,189

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan household census, 2014.

Note: All figures are numbers reported for the children between the ages of 5 and 16 years.

Table 21: Average SAT scores (%) by district for grades 5 and 8 - 2014

Name of district	Grade 5				Grade 8			
	Language	Math	Science	Overall	Language	Math	Science	Overall
Badin	31.9	18.6	19.5	23.3	36.8	13.1	16.4	22.1
Dadu	30.2	16.3	16.2	20.9	35.3	12.0	15.7	21.0
Ghotki	24.5	15.0	14.3	17.9	37.7	11.9	15.1	21.6
Hyderabad	25.3	14.0	15.8	18.4	27.3	13.2	15.9	18.8
Jamshoro	30.6	16.8	16.5	21.3	40.0	12.4	17.9	23.4
Kambar-Shahdadkot	27.0	13.9	14.4	18.4	39.8	11.6	16.4	22.6
Karachi	37.0	19.9	24.1	27.0	35.5	15.6	19.7	23.6
Kashmore-Kandhkot	27.0	15.4	14.5	19.0	33.9	12.9	14.7	20.5
Khairpur	27.6	15.4	15.5	19.5	43.6	12.3	16.8	24.2
Larkana	23.2	14.0	14.1	17.1	37.7	11.9	15.2	21.6
Matari	25.7	14.5	13.4	17.9	38.8	13.1	15.5	22.5
Mirpurkhas	34.7	20.6	21.7	25.7	38.5	16.9	19.5	25.0
Naushehro Feroze	25.5	15.3	14.8	18.5	35.4	12.5	14.5	20.8
Sanghar	33.7	19.0	19.2	24.0	38.0	15.6	18.2	23.9
Shaheed Benazirabad	33.2	20.3	19.4	24.3	37.0	15.4	16.8	23.1
Shikarpur	19.9	13.3	13.2	15.5	36.1	11.7	15.4	21.0
Sukkur	22.0	14.2	14.5	16.9	33.4	11.9	15.0	20.1
Tando Allahyar	33.0	17.9	18.7	23.2	36.4	12.7	16.7	22.0
Tando Muhammad Khan	33.8	19.1	19.0	24.0	39.4	14.5	16.5	23.5
Tharparkar	34.1	23.7	22.6	26.8	42.2	17.9	19.4	26.5
District Thatta	28.4	14.3	14.7	19.1	37.0	11.6	15.6	21.4
Umerkot	36.0	24.5	23.2	27.9	39.2	15.8	17.3	24.1

Source: Standardised Achievement Test (SAT)-Sindh, 2013-14

Table 22: Number and type of schools in selected eight union councils of District Thatta

Name of union council	Type of school	Level of school			Total schools
		Primary	Middle	High	
Buhara	Private	1	1	0	2
	Government	46	0	1	47
	Total	47	1	1	49
Chato Chand	Private	0	0	1	1
	Government	60	1	1	62
	Total	60	1	2	63
Garho	Private	1	0	0	1
	Government	41	1	0	42
	Total	42	1	0	43
Gharo	Private	1	1	1	3
	Government	30	2	0	32
	Total	31	3	1	35
Haji Ghirano	Government	30	2	0	32
Keti Bundar	Private	2	0	0	2
	Government	79	1	3	83
	Total	81	1	3	85
Mirpur Sakro	Private	2	2	4	8
	Government	72	2	3	77
	Total	74	4	7	85
Sukhpur	Private	1	0	0	1
	Government	62	6	1	69
	Total	63	6	1	70
Total		428	19	15	462

Source: RSPN and Alif Ailaan school census, 2014.

The Alif Ailaan Campaign is funded by the UK Department for International Development.

alifailaan.pk | @alifailaan | facebook.com/alifailaan

الف
اعلان | Alif
Ailaan

