

## EVALUATING AND IMPROVING MATHEMATICS

### CURRICULUM-2000 IN PAKISTAN

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#### INTRODUCTION

The process of curriculum development has been crucial in socio-economic planning and in setting the direction of education system at the national level. From time to time many attempts were made to improve the national curriculum ever since the creation of Pakistan. The reports of the various education commissions, the education policies and the five-year plans have duly emphasized the need for quality education, as well as the suitability of the structure of curriculum comparable with the advanced countries of the world and also meeting the needs of the country.

The last national curriculum of mathematics for classes 1-X in Pakistan was implemented at the national level in 1995-1996 (Govt. of Pakistan, 1996). Pursuing a long-term strategy, this national curriculum was formulated after going through a series of cycles of extensive reviews; need assessment studies, various curriculum models and curriculum development approaches. Based on the approved curriculum, the textbooks and related materials were developed at the national level through a highly elaborate process, spanned over a period of more than six years. These books were introduced in the schools of all the four provinces of the country.

In an attempt to overcome the weakness, if any, of the previous national curriculum and to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Education Department of the Punjab, the biggest province of Pakistan, was given a task to develop the mathematics curriculum for classes 1-X11 entitled *The Mathematics Curriculum-2000* (Govt. of Pakistan, 2001). This curriculum ultimately became the National Curriculum and was implemented, phase-wise all over Pakistan, from year 2002. Consequently, the National Institute of Science and Technical Education (NISTE), being an organization for supervising and ensuring the standard and quality improvement of science, mathematics and technical education in the country, was entrusted with the job to examine the new curriculum, and furnish its comments, suggestions and recommendations for improvement.

To this end, an exercise for the evaluation of the new secondary curriculum was carried out in NISTE with a view to: