



Project Progress Monitoring Report

April 2017



Executive Summary

Introduction

This document marks the beginning of a **bi-monthly** progress monitoring report for the Higher Education Development Program. Prior to this, the project produced quarterly progress report, quarterly monitoring report and monthly agreed actions M&E report. However, merging the mentioned reports into one, OMST will be presenting its stakeholders with the bi-monthly report.

Since February 2017, the implementation of each of the project components and themes is well under way and is delivering expected results at scale.

In the OBE-SCL component, the HEDP is working on an online OBE-SCL Course for the Master Trainers who have been trained in HEDP organized workshops in and out of Afghanistan. The project is also preparing for more sets of workshops to be held soon.

The implementation of component 1, is well underway and it is expected to deliver the results on time. The team is working to implement the pre-planned activities according to the project recent aide memoires. In component 2, the OMST is engaged with supporting HEDP, and implement operational tasks of the project. The audit and control through their systematic approach evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management and control in the office. The monitoring system is operational and is providing required data in a timely manner.

Challenges

There have been few implementation bottlenecks affecting HEDP. Follow up and delays in procurement projects of HEDP with National Procurement Agency have been a major challenge for implementation of the project and especially affect their timeliness. On the other hand, lack of accurate, detailed, and timely data fails to support evidence-based decision making. On awarding the scholarships, processing of MoUs with foreign universities for scholarships has been challenging and it indeed has had its impacts on receiving admission confirmation.

On the Safeguard and construction side of the project, the project has faced challenges on the Bamyan dormitory project which happened to have land issue. A team from MoHE as well as Office of the President is to visit the area to take a firm decision in this regard. I.e. either the land will be specified or the allocation will be given to another university.

Moreover, the delay in receiving No Objection Letter (NOL) or the World Bank approval as well as delay in receiving feedback from the World Bank team make it difficult for some of the activities to take place on time and based on the plan. For instance, in the QAA component, one reason the peer reviewers payment were delayed was the late NOL.

These are just some of the challenges currently facing the project and the team is working on solutions now.

Expectations for the Next Two Months

HEDP

Scholarships: The placement of the few remaining awardees from 2016 and the admission confirmation of the new cohort. **Research:** The Research Conference is planned to be organized. Monitoring of the new research projects implemented in 2017 starts. **OBE-SCL:** OBE SCL Conference to be held, appreciating the Master Trainers with MoHE issued certificates. Moreover, organizing the faculty deans' workshops for 15 universities to include 77 deans is expected in the month of May. **QAA:** Peer reviewers' report once final will be sent to the universities to affect their institutional action plan.

OMST

Data Collection: OMST will carry out analysis of the baseline and current data in a timely manner. **TPV Completion:** The contracted consultancy is to furnish the third party verification report for the three DLIs in Mid May 2017. **Procurement:** The contracts under process shall be awarded during the next reporting period, the specifications of the IQAUs and PDCs to be prepared and shall be sent to Procurement Directorate for procurement processes, considering the mentioned timeline.

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Delivering Intended Results

Component I

Gender Development - Increasing Female Enrollment

In respect to the Gender development-related activities, as a stimulus to increase female enrollment in higher education, the following steps have been taken.

- A concept for the disadvantaged female scholarship was developed and shared with Bank.
- Facility enhancement plan for the Statistic department of MoHE was developed.
- 3 provincial universities were introduced for the next phase of Counseling Center. The work of Counseling center of KEU is in procurement processes.
- 2 provincial universities were introduced for the next phase of child care Center.
- We are in the process of selecting universities for which buses will be allocated. The selection will directly be related to the availability of female dormitory, a distance of University to the dormitory, and a total number of female students. A committee comprised of HEDP leadership, Gender Department and MoHE H.E. Minister or H.E. DM will make the final decision.
- *Pishnehad* (Official Request) was sent to Minister for fuel, driver, and maintenance of 25 buses.
- *Pishnehad* (Official Request) was sent to Minister for the inclusion of next phases of Childcare and counseling centers budget in MoHE annual budget.
- *Maktoobs* (Official Letter) were sent to three Kabul-based universities for planning the Orientation program according to their SIDPs.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation

IQA: OMST has been successful in inaugurating three IQAUs, that later developed three Strategic Plans. Their scorecards have also been submitted.

EQA: To help determine if universities meet the standards of quality, the HEDP QAA related activities carry the below statuses.

- The self-assessment process of the 8 pilot universities, Kabul, Kabul Polytechnic, Balkh, Kandahar, Kardan, American University of Afghanistan, Kateb and Khatam-Al-Nabieen University, started on January 17, 2017. During the process the 8 pilot universities worked on their self-assessment reports; necessary support was provided by the Ministry of Higher Education, the Higher Education Development Program and Quality Assurance and Accreditation Directorate. The 8 pilot universities were able to submit their final self-assessment reports on March 8, 2017, which was a deadline set by the QAAD.
- The self-assessment report writing was followed by the external review process. A team of eight highly professional and well trained external peer reviewers, who received training in Afghanistan and abroad, accompanied by an international peer reviewer was deployed on March 11, 2017, to start the peer review process. The universities were informed in advance of the peer review visits, the detailed visit agenda was shared with the eight pilot universities. These peer review visits were conducted very professionally and were conducted based on the three-day agenda by each team.

- The peer reviewers, have completed their final reports on April 20, 2017. The final reports are now submitted to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Board for final decision making. The QAA Board reviews each report to make a decision of awarding full, provisional or no accreditation. The review process by the QAA board started on April 22 and continued until April 26, 2017.
- The board reviewed the reports developed by the peer reviewers and have made their final decision for each university. All 8 universities will remain in the stage of accreditation; however, they will be given a different timeline to meet the QAA standards defined in the framework.



Figure 1 - Peer reviewers discussion

- The 8 pilot universities will have to develop an institutional action plan based on the feedback provided in the report. The institutional action plan will be officially submitted to the QAA Board for Approval. After the approval process, the action plan will have to be integrated into the institutional strategic plan so it can help universities achieve full accreditation.

ICT Enhanced Teaching and Learning

To enhance the quality of teaching and learning in universities, and so to help learners to achieve better outcomes, following activities around framing Information and Communication Technology-enhanced teaching and learning are undertaken by HEDP.

- Shaikh Zayed University ICT center is in the contracting stage but yet to be endorsed by National Procurement Committee (NPC). The ICT center projects for three universities (Ghazni, Takhar, and Kunar) are currently under evaluation by the evaluation committee of MoHE. Interested bidders have submitted their bidding documents and MoHE is currently reviewing them. Upon closing of announcement for Paktia ICT center then the documents will be evaluated by MoHE.
- All seven universities have introduced their technical ICT technicians for their ICT centers. The first batch of ICT center technicians training have been conducted at the end of April 2017. (All seven universities have introduced their ICT trainers for training the faculty members of their respective university. Each university has introduced two trainers.)
- Two of the ICT Centers are contracted out, Shaheed Rabbani Education University and Faryab University. The physical work for the awarded contracts is already commenced and Faryab University ICT center physical work will be completed within a month time.

Outcome Based Education and Student-Centered Learning

To facilitate reforming the educational model of Afghan Universities to an Outcome Based Education with a Student-Centered Learning philosophy, the following activities have taken place.

- Since January 2017, 20 OBE-SCL Master Trainers conducted OBE-SCL Workshops at 12 public universities. The duration of workshops varied in length. Some conducted for 6 days while others conducted for more than 10 days. Around 260 faculties have been trained in these workshops.
- A certificate of participation has been devised to be awarded to the active participants of these workshops.

- Universities have been informed to introduce 8 qualified candidates for the advanced OBE-SCL Workshop at UTM. Almost all universities managed to introduce their candidates. The process of evaluating and selecting the qualified candidates has started and is in progress.
- There will be a two-day workshop for 24 Master Trainers to discuss some key points regarding the OBE-SCL Workshops.
- Preparations for the 3-day OBE-SCL Workshop for Faculty Deans are ongoing and arrangements are being taken care of.
- A certificate of the award has been devised by HEDP and signed by Minister of Higher Education to be awarded to 24 Master Trainers as a token of appreciation and recognition. This certificate will be awarded on the One-Day OBE-SCL Conference in May 24th, 2017. For more information see [ANNEX 1](#).
- Recently a blog has been developed and updates and news regarding the OBE-SCL were uploaded there.
- An online OBE-SCL Course has also been created to enhance the practice and implementation of OBE-SCL across the universities.

Scholarships:

To improve the qualification of the public universities' academics, the procedure for awarding the full-time faculty members have made the following progress.

- For the year 2017, 106 have been awarded. We are in the process of filing applications for faculty members in some universities.
- Additional fields for female academics include Journalism, Law, Education and Sciences.

The awardees are usually placed in Thailand, Malaysia, India and Iran. Some of the universities to name, where awardees have gone/will go are: Asian Institute of Technology, Indian School of Mines, International Islamic University of Malaysia, Jamia Millia Islamia University, Kabul Medical University, Lovely Professional University, Royal Tropical Institute, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, University of Agricultural Sciences, University of LYON 1 - France, University Technology Mara, University of Sains Malaysia, Universiti of Putra Malaysia and etc.

- One MoU in progress between MoHE Afghanistan and Malaysia MOHE
- We are in the mean of contacting and initial stages of communicating with other universities to place Faculty members in the relevant fields.

Short Term Training:

Short-term training of the Technical staff of universities needs Assessment TOR was drafted and Shared with The Bank for their Comments. We received some feedback from the Bank and incorporated the comments into the draft TOR. After incorporation of comments from Bank, it was re-shared with the Bank. Bank has come up with new suggestions and there is more information that needs to be added to the TOR. Therefore, we are in the stage of collecting data from all universities that will be included in the TOR. Once data is received; TOR will be revised and shared with the bank for their approval.

Leadership Training:

A draft concept note for the training of leadership and management was prepared and shared with the Bank. However, Bank recommended some changes, and proposed new ideas, and increased the number of target participants to be trained. Therefore, the concept note will be revised and shared with the bank as per the proposed changes.

Strategic Institutional Development Plan

To strengthen the autonomy of universities, KU, KMSU, SREU universities have finalized and published their SIDPs on university and MoHE websites. Draft M&E plan for monitoring the implementation of the 3 SIDPs is shared with the bank for their comments and approval. The 3 universities will monitor annually the implementation experience through Annual Progress Reports (APRs) which will also be reviewed with the MoHE and disclosed publicly on MoHE and university websites. For 2017, 10 universities (KPU, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Balkh, SZU, ANASTU, Herat, AUAF, Bakhtar, and Kardan) are working on their 5-year strategic plans. The mentioned universities formed their SIDP committees and have started their work.

Research

To promote economic and social development and culture of research in Afghanistan higher education system, HEDP has had the following achievement for the second round of the World bank sponsored research projects for the academics in priority disciplines.

- 30 projects (10 group, 20 individual are awarded in 2017 and the same number of the projects were awarded in 2016
- 25 research projects from 2016 are completed, out of which, 15 research projects are published in Journals (5 group and 10 individual.
- A draft concept note for the Training of Trainers in preparing good research proposals is prepared and shared with the bank for comments and approval. In addition, a research conference is planned for 2017 a draft concept note and tentative agenda of the conference are shared with the bank for approval.

Component II

Human Resources and Admin

In the operation section of the project, the human resources and admin department are engaged in the recruitment process, hitherto with respect to recruitment, all of the key positions in both program and operations sections, OMST and HEDP respectively. The newly recruited are Sr. Manager for Managerial Development Manager, Scholarship Officer, and UOC for Parwan University, Faryab University, and Paktia University. The recruitment of two engineers for MoHE and Balkh UOC are in progress.

Moreover, recently, leave database for the staff to leave Management and a transport chart for office vehicles have been developed. Other Admin related activities include management of peer review sessions, as well as the UOC Coordination Meetings at HEDP, and other routine activities. Furthermore, OMST has been successful in requesting and gaining Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) for all staff of OMST.

The department is currently engaged in the arrangement of the stock, APQN conference in Moscow, developing an effective filing system for HR and Admin, in soft and hard, revision of the HR Policy, and electronic Attendance for the HEDP staff.

IT

Similarly, OMST IT officers' following activities for the past three months were the following. Moreover, a blog for HEDP website, www.hedp.af/blog, has been created. Regularly modifying the website for major contents; maintains Firewall for Internet Bandwidth management; maintaining and troubleshooting Server, Share folder and entire HEDP network and devices; working on email services based on the help.a website, and annual registration of hedp.af domain name. The IT officer has also been providing support of IT facilities for seminars and conferences in

MOHE and some other routine tasks such as installation and configuration of computer hardware, operating systems, and applications.

Finance

Component 1

The activities of the finance team with respect to component 1 includes submission of the IUFRR for component one to the World Bank. It is waiting for NOL due to third party validation. Moreover, the allotment for Kunar dormitory has been created under component one & under process in HEDP. Most of the contracts are awarded and we are waiting for the BOQ to start the payments process. World Bank FM team reviews the entire documents.

Component 2

The activities of the finance team with respect to component 2 include submission of IUFRR for the first quarter & six-month forecast to WB & we received NOL on this. Moreover, the allotment for TPV has been created & submitted to MoF. Allotment for 1st installment (40%) of the new researcher has been requested. Payment to peer reviewer has been done. WB FM team review the cash book, bank book, BRS, cash count, advance sheet, petty cash book & have some comments which are reflected in Aide Memoire. WB FM consultant checks the QuickBooks software & has some comments which are reflected in Aide Memoire. SDU report has been reconciled with project cash books. Allotment for QA workshop has been created & under process in MoHE. Salaries of HEDP & support staff have been paid up to the end of Hamal 1396. The required cash for OBE-SCL training is withdrawn & ready.

Moreover, the audit report of both the components has been submitted to the internal auditor of HEDP with necessary feedback & all the requested documents for External auditors has been given to them for review.

Procurement

Component 1

The procurement team of the OMST has successfully completed the following activities which were remained from the year 2016. Approving the procurement of the female buses from National Procurement Committee (NPC); approving IT equipment for KU, KMU, and KPU from NPC; approving of Khust ICT center from NPC; moreover, the purchase of 60 lab Kit for 36 universities is under evaluation in National Procurement Agency (NPA).

For the year 2017, ICT centers for four universities, carry the following status: Takhar and Paktia are in evaluation stages; Kunar is re-announced. Ghazni ICT center is approved by NPC. Tickets for Scholarship awardees to their educational destination have been sent to Procurement and are currently at the evaluation stage. Moreover, the IT equipment for 5 universities announced. Also, Dormitories for female students in Takhar and Helmand are under evaluation in Procurement Directorate.

Additionally, lecture blocks construction for Laghman and Wardak universities are under evaluation. For Parwan University, the final evaluation report has been submitted to NPA for further review. Lab equipment for 19 universities has been announced through ICB method. Library support for 25 universities has been re-announced. In respect to the Furniture for existing lecture blocks in 7 universities, final evaluation report has been submitted to NPA for further review. Similarly, for the Counselling center in KEU and Child care facility at KMU notice for the award of the contract has been issued. Lastly, the Research Center establishment in Herat University has been re-announced.

Moreover, ICT equipment for the year 2016 and 2017 for 10 universities are under process, carrying the following standing. For the year 2016, the project is endorsed by the NPC and currently in the award of contract stage for four Universities (KU, KPU, KMU and Parwan University) Maidan Wardak to be processed soon. For the year 2017, the ICT

equipment for ANASTU, Laghman, Ghazni Technical Universities, Daikundi and Samangan HEIs are under evaluation with NPA and MOHE procurement.

Component 2:

The procurement achievements and completed activities for component 2 include awarding the contract for the Third Party Validation of DLIs 2016, and awarding contracts for the translation of peer reviewers visit report and handbook, Quality Assurance Framework, Environmental & Social Management Plan, Quality Assurance Self-Assessment Report, GRM Manual, MOHE Strategic Plan II.

OMST also revised the procurement plan and IOC plan for the FY 2017 and sent to the World Bank for the NOL. It also submitted the revised procurement plan for FY 2017 through STEP to the World Bank for the NOL.

Social Safeguard

The social safeguard achievements include the followings:

- GRM Manual is finalized, translated into Dari and Pashto, and are going to be shared with all universities and MoHE related departments. Moreover, GRM tab would be added into HEDP site by end of this week.
- Report of 4 construction Projects was shared with the bank.
- GRCs for 8 universities were established.
- A proposal for the Site Specific ESMPs and inclusion of them in procurement procedure has been drafted and submitted to the Bank.

Environmental Safeguard

The environmental safeguard achievements include the followings:

- Conducted ESMF safeguards training for construction companies, whose construction works are started last year (1395). Before starting their site works again after the winter stop break.
- Conducted NHESP II/ ESMF awareness rising and Local GRCs establishment workshops for Kabul, Logar, and Herat provinces at the project sites.
- Traveled to Parwan and Herat provinces for projects site selection and screening.
- Traveled to Logar province and had projects screening and monitoring.
- Kabul university site visits and monitoring.
- Had a brief monitoring and evaluation program of the construction works (for the projects 1395) and recommended specific safeties and mitigation measures to continuing their works on sites for the 1396 working year.
- Shared Logar and Herat universities ESMP with the Bank.
- Kunar and Ghazni provinces site screening forms are received soon will share the complete ESMPs package with the Bank.
- Following Bamyán and Badghis projects final report with MoHE.

For a brief note on the field visits and ESMPs, see [ANNEX 2](#).

Communication:

The communication specialist at OMST has developed and finalized the HEDP Communication strategy. She also created and is updating the Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube Channel for HEDP. Creation of the Mailing-list of beneficiaries, upgrade of HEDP Website with three new tabs (Announcement, GRM, and HEDP Blog), the creation of a closed Facebook group, the design of HEDP brochure are some other highlights of activities in communication.

Similarly, 1st HEDP newsletter which highlights HEDP 4th quarter activities was created and shared with the intended audience. YouTube channel is updated with interviews of OBE-SCL Master Trainers and trainees reflecting on their experiences with OBE-SCL workshop. HEDP supported research reports are uploaded on HEDP Website/Blog. Also, the specialist worked closely with Bank and RUMI Consultancy for writing three stories on HEDP achievements (Scholarships, OBE-SCL, and Research beneficiaries).

University Operation

The highlight of University operation Manager and the UOCs at 24 Universities activities during this reporting period are pointed out as follows:

- Prepared, revised and finalized the lists of books for 25 public universities and shared it with the procurement department of HEDP for further process. The procurement of books for the universities has been announced by the National Procurement Authority (NPA).
- Similarly, prepared, revised and finalized the lists of lab equipment for 19 public universities and shared it with the procurement department of HEDP for further process. The procurement of lab equipment for the universities has been announced by the (NPA).
- Established and inaugurated, with support from the operations, three Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAU) in Kabul-based universities. The units (IQAU) were inaugurated by Her Excellency Minister of Higher Education, HEDP representatives, university leadership and other officials from the ministry.
- Provided support to the pilot phase of self-assessment of the 4 public and 4 private universities.
- Support provided to the External Peer Review process.



Figure 2- University Operation Coordinators Retreat

- Organized a two-day retreat/orientation program for the 24 University Operations Coordinators (UOC) in Kabul.
- Support provided to 8 PDC establishment surveys.
- Completed the Internal Quality Assurance Unit Assessment Surveys at 5 public universities.
- Collected the technical staff data from 22 universities. The data is essential for the design of future technical training for the mentioned staff.
- Support provided to the Environmental and Social Safeguard sections in screening project implementation sites and establishing GRC committees in the relevant universities.
- Recruitment process of 3 University Operations Coordinator for Paktia, Parwan and Faryab universities has been completed. Recruitment of the Balk UOC is in its final stage and will soon be completed.

Internal Audit

The OMST has completed the Internal Audit Reports of both C-I & II for the FY-1395. Moreover, 3 Public Universities have been identified along with MoHE Payroll for Audit, all preliminary works are done. The payroll audits will be started beginning May 2017.

Internal Control

For the reporting period, as part of the internal control, apart from the compliances, OMST has been engaged with PDCs and IQEUs working packages.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Apart from developing and drafting progress and monitoring reports, the M&E has been engaged with data collections and analysis activities. The followings are the data collected and confirmed since February 2017.

- Re-confirmed Student's' Enrollment data for 2015 and 2016
- Confirmed Academics data (Masters and above) for 2015 and 2016
- Data on female students benefited from dormitories in 2016
- Re-confirmation of reserved Seats for female students in Priority Disciplines in 2016 and 2017 Kankor Examination.
- Organization Structure (Tashkeel) for Academic and Non-Academic Staff of Universities.

Updates on the project development Indicators, Intermediate Outcome indicators and the Legal Covenants are accessible in [ANNEX 3](#), [ANNEX 4](#) and [ANNEX 5](#) of this document.

Concluding Notes:

Hitherto, with the coordination received from OMST, the HEDP/MoHE appears to have its steps on the journey to success and effective project implementation. It has been heading toward success to increase access to higher education especially among women and in priority disciplines and sub-disciplines. Additionally, effective work on raising the quality of the higher education system and facilitating the expansion of higher education in the country with a strategic focus on the future development has been going on. Overall, the HEDP/MoHE is on target for its planned activities. The MoHE- HEDP has been successful in following up and performing the activities listed by the new aide memoir that has been effective from April 2017.