



Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE)
Higher Education Development Program (HEDP)
Operations and Monitoring Support Team (OMST)

Bi monthly Progress Monitoring Report

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Submitted by: Operation and Monitoring Support Team (OMST)

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Acronym

ANASTU	Afghanistan National Agriculture Science and Technology University
DLI	Disbursement Linked Indicator
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
HEDP	Higher Education Development Project
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
IQAU	Internal Quality Assurance Unit
IT	Information Technology
KMU's	Kabul Medical University
QAA	Quality Assurance and Accreditation
KPU	Kabul Polytechnic University
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPA	National Environmental Protection Agency
OBE	Outcome Based Education
OMST	Operation Monitoring and Support Team
QAAD	Quality Assurance and Accreditation Directorate
SCL	Student-Centered Learning
SIDP	Strategic Institutional Development Plan
SZU	Shaikh Zayed University (Khost)
WB	World Bank

A. Executive Summary

This report covers the progress of the last two months and cumulatively the progress of the year. However, detailed and analytical annual report will elaborate the cumulative progress of the year 2019. By now, majority of the agreed actions have been achieved. The social safeguard related agreed actions have been cleared. The social safeguard position is merged with environment specialist under “Social and Environmental Specialist”. The list of 12 PAFs of Bamyan have been finalized. The new list has been endorsed by the provincial officials and the 12 families have been provided with deeds. The two fatalities cases have been cleared. Bamyan fatality case was found to be out of our PAFs. The police report of one of the death case of HEDP master scholarship holder was shared with WB. The HEDP budget analysis was done (component 2 with 1.2 million shortages, and component 2 with around 4 million surpluses). This analytical sheet was shared with WB and we are yet to discuss this in details for the future allocations and etc. The block fund is still not released and the QuickBooks is being daily updated. The leadership training was conducted at NITTTR, India for around 20 senior academic members. A committee was formed at the Ministry level for the oversight and monitoring of OBE and SCL implementation. *The agreed actions tracker is attached as annex 1.*

OMST conducted The DLI verification study. According to the data, DLI #2 & 5 (OBE-SCL and IQAU) have been achieved, while the DLI #3 (ICT) isn't achieved. According to the information provided by the universities and documents submitted, six ICTs at (Faryab, KEU, Ghazni, Pktya, Khost and Takhar) universities are marked functional, while the remaining 5 ICTs are none-functional. The program is strictly following with MoHE on the hiring of adequate number of ICT technicians at universities to ensure they are functional by the time TPV conduct the DLIs verification. The same, out of 18 verified IQAUs, 10 were functional and the rest remained none-functional

The program as well conducted impact assessment of short term technical and maintenance trainings, conducted in the second half of 2019. The impact assessment report will be shared soon. Regarding the progress on result framework, the program has achieved all target values for the 2019's indicators. The result framework is annexed to the report.

With respect to the female enrolment, the data stands the same as reported in the previous report. The total student's enrollment in priority disciplines stands at 88,159 (19,928 Females and 68,231 Males), exceeding the annual target of 2019 as 80,500. The same, the first year enrollment of female students stand at 5,897 exceeding the target of 2019. The only progress made in this reporting period is the inauguration of Child care centers at Takhar and Bamyan Universities, and inauguration of Counselling Centers at Balkh, Bamyan and Jawzjan universities. Various other small projects are progressing well as masseurs to promote female students in public universities. The program has launched the OBE-SCL workshop at Balkh university for 21 academic members of the faculties. with this number, the trained academic members reach to 1,867 by now. The verification is underway to determine the number of trained academic members in OBE-SCL and the number of trainees who are practicing OBE-SCL. During this reporting period, four new ICT and IT centers completed 100% and handed over. They are the ICTs of Bamyan, KMU and IT Centers of Baghlan and Alberoni universities are completed. Cumulatively, the program has established 9 ICT centers and 2 IT centers by now, while the physical work ICT center of Kabul Polytechnic university is ongoing.

During the period under review, the program continued on implementing the placement plan for master and PhD scholarships holders. In this reporting period, the number of placed students have been increased from 366 in the last report to 396 by now (372 Master degree and 24 PhD). To be in safe side, the program initiated Plan B as well. 11 additional master scholarships were awarded to female academic members. The list is endorsed by steering committee and will be shared with WB for the NoL. 122 master scholarships have been completed by now.

With respect to the Strategic Institutional Development Plans (SIDP's), all 25 universities which were in plan for 2019 have successfully developed their strategic plans. Given this, by 2019 cumulatively over 38 universities have developed their strategic plans have been developed since 2016. The project target for this theme has been 24 until 2022. Likewise, the Annual Progress Report is on track to be received from 10 universities that completed their strategic plans last year. Seemingly, this component exceeded its target by the end of 2019. On the research grant part of the project, in 2019, 55 research projects, which included 12 group and 43 individual projects, were awarded. This way, the cumulative number of research projects awarded since 2016 reaches 155. However, the target set in the PIM for this theme was 140 research projects by the end of 2022. So, the target has already been exceeded by 15 research projects. Out of the total 155 projects awarded, 42 are group research projects while the remaining 113 projects are individual.

In the reporting period, the physical work of 9 IQAUs have been completed, with this, the number of IQAUs established reaches to 18, exceeding the 2019 target of 10. The scorecard for assessing IQAUs functionality is revised as agreed in the last WB mission and shared with the TPV. In addition, the external review of 9 more universities was conducted in this reporting period and by now, 42 (16 public and 26 private) universities have been externally reviewed which exceeds the 2019 target (30). The current budget execution rate for the fiscal year 2019 stands at 91.33 % (94% component II and 91% component I).

Along with all these good progress made over the year, the program is challenged by the delay happened in the infrastructure projects. There have been four projects stopped since long ago. On procurement, there have been four projects pending for a long time. The text books and lab equipment are among them. It seems to be a technical issue with national procurement authority on the nature of projects. They have asked to change the textbook project into digital library project, as requested by H.E the president. With respect to the scholarships, some of our beneficiaries have requested for 5th and 6th semester sponsorship, which exceeds the study period that HEDP has initially planned. Sponsoring beneficiaries' fifths and sixth semester will incur fiduciary challenges for the project. Therefore, it is recommended that joint monitoring missions be conducted to see what could be the reason behind the prolonged period of study and what can be done to address the challenges. The relevant universities and beneficiaries should be met to seek clarifications on the issue. The OMST and MoHE's management is to discuss the above mentioned issues, and resolve them on timely basis.

B) Component One Activities:

Theme 1.1: Increasing Access to Priority Degree Program for Economic Development

The enrollment data is being updated once a year. In the last reporting period, the data was analyzed based on the original priority disciplines. By now, no changes in the data is visible. According to the data collected from the policy and planning directorate of MoHE, there has been a sharp increase in both first year and total enrollment rates, as compared to the 2018 enrollment data. Based on the original priority list, the total number of students in priority disciplines has been increased from 81,984 in 2018 to 88,159 in 2019, exceeding the 2019 which exceeds the annual target of 2019 (80, 500). In respect to the DLI target, the number of female students enrolled at first year priority degree programs stands at 5,897 by now. this number has been increased from 5,348 in 2018 to 5,897 in 2019.

Table 1: Students Enrollment in Higher Education at Public Universities by 2018

Indicators	By 2018		
	Female	Male	Total
First Year Enrollment in Priority Disciplines (Intermediate Outcome Indicator, DLII)	5,897	19,356	25,235
Total Enrollment in Priority Disciplines (Project Development Indicator)	19,928 and	68,231	81,984

Note: The date presented at this table is based on original PD.

Measures to Promote Female Enrolment in Public Universities.

The program has been functioning well in terms of various measures to promote female enrollment in public universities. Following are the progress up to date.

Child Care Centers:

The child care center of Takhar and Bamyan universities inaugurated by H.E the Minister and they are now functional and getting utilized. The physical work of renovation of child care center in Albironi and Parwan Universities has been started with 50% progress. MoHE has approved the renovation of Child care center in Herat and Kandahar Universities from their own budget. It's expected to be renovated in 2020. Cumulatively, the program has established three child care centers (Takhar, Bamyan, and Kabul medical universities), while renovation of child care center in Albironi and Parwan Universities has been in progress.

Counselling Centers: During the reporting period, Counselling center of Counselling Center of Balkh, Bamyan and Jawzjan are inaugurated. KU's counselling center was inaugurated in the last reporting period. Cumulatively, the program has established five counseling centers at KEU, Balkh, KU, Jozjan and Bamyan universities. the physical work of renovation of counselling center at Herat University is ongoing.

Water and Lavatories Projects: During the period under review, the Water and Lavatories in Kunduz and Balkh universities have been completed and being utilized. Cumulatively, the program has provided water and lavatories facilities at 13 universities so far. In addition, the physical work of water and lavatories in three more universities (KU, KMU, and Samangan) is in progress.

The Disadvantaged Scholarships: During the year 2019, disadvantaged female scholarships were awarded at 6 universities (KU, KEU, Herat and Balkh, KMU and KPU). 50 students were picked from each universities. Students received the stipend since the beginning of the semester (September 2019). Through this initiative, MoHE would like to promote female retentions from disadvantaged background. In the year 2020, MoHE has planned 8 universities to award disadvantaged scholarships for female students.

Theme1.2: Modernizing and Enhancing the Quality of Teaching and Learning

Theme 1.2.1: Outcome Based Education and Student-Centered Learning

Under this thematic area, the program has launched the OBE-SCL workshop at Balkh university for 21 academic members of the faculties. The training has been started in the second half of December and will end by first week of January 2020. A PDC at Bamuan university was inaugurated by the MoHE leadership in December. In addition, the program has started the verification of DLI #2. A questionnaire was designed and administered to collect data from students on the verification of OBE-SCL practice by the trained faculty staff. Unlike previous years, this year the students are as well part of the verification process.

Despite exceeding 2019 target for this thematic area, the program expands the target groups, and is focusing on the implementation and practices aspect of OBE-SCL by faculties to ensure teaching and learning has improved. The number of trained academic staff under this thematic area has increased from 1,818 in the last report into 1,846 by now. As recently Helmand University conducted and completed the OBE-SCL Workshop for 28 fresh faculty staff.

The OBE-SCL PowerPoint Slides are being translated by the OBE-SCL Champions. As a lesson learned from previous OBE-SCL workshops, we noticed that the majority of the university faculty staff do not have a good command of English and it was frequently requested by both champions and participants for the translated versions of OBE-SCL resources. Hence, the program took this initiative and asked the OBE-SCL champions to translate the OBE-SCL PPT slides and handouts to Dari and Pashto and also to proofread the OBE-SCL workbooks. The translation work by champions is still running. Once all resources are translated accurately to Dari and Pashto, then we will share them with both Champions and participants. This will ensure that the participants with a low level of English proficiency will learn more effectively and concretely.

With respect to the agreed actions of the last ISM, this area progress well. A committee was formed at the Ministry level for the oversight and monitoring of OBE and SCL implementation. The composition of the committee include representation from among the master trainers or champions and will gradually be replicated at the universities. The OBE-SCL trainings have been expanded to public higher education institutes. Helmand, Nimroz and Paktika higher education institutes have conducted the trainings and several others are planned for 2020.

Theme 1.2.2: Information and Communications Technology Enhanced Teaching and Learning

During the reporting period, four new ICT and IT centers completed 100% and handed over. They are the ICTs of Bamyan, KMU and IT Centers of Baghlan and Alberoni universities are completed. Cumulatively 11 ICT centers are completed, which out of them six are functional. The physical work of KPU's ICT center is in progress. Our OMST DLI verification report indicated that some university lack adequate number of technicians, based on the follow up made with the MoHE, the recruitment for ICT technicians for four ICT centers (Ghazni, Faryab, Khost and Kunar) is approved by HE minister and will soon be staffed at universities.

With respect to the ICT equipment projects, 2 projects (Helmand and Oruzgan ICT equipment projects) completed and handed over in this reporting period. In addition, 8 ICT equipment (Saripul, Farah, Badghis, Paktika, Kandahar, Herat, Nangarhar, and Jawzjan) are in implementation process and will be completed soon. During this period, the AfgREN-NOC project is offered and started the implementation.

Theme1.3: Improving the Qualification and Skills of Academic and Technical Staff Members

Theme 1.3.1: Scholarships for Masters Degrees in Priority Disciplines

During this reporting period, the program continued with placing the remaining Master and PhD scholarships. The number of placed academic members has increased from 366 in the last report into 396

by now. 30 master and PhD scholarships have been placed during this reporting period. Total number of placed PhD scholarships reaches to 24 by now.

As a measure to secure the achievement of targets for this thematic areas, we had proposed in the last two reports to implement a plan B and award some additional scholarships. The Plan B was an alternative instead of those who withdraw from the process and decline their scholarships during the half way before getting placed. For this reason, the program awarded 11 additional scholarships during this reporting period. All these scholarships have been awarded to female academic members to meet the 33% ratio. The list of new awarded scholarship was approved by steering committee and would be submitted to WB soon. With this, the number of awarded scholarships increased from 477 to 488 by now.

The program is still required to place the remaining 74 academic members in the priority programs no later than Feb 2020. The remaining placements should have been done by the next two months to complete their studies by at least 2022. The table # 4 indicates that 11 scholarships will be placed at July 2020 which might not be completed by 2022. So far, 122 master scholarships have been completed. The following table indicates the updated data on this thematic area of the program.

Table 2: Updated Scholarships Aggregated data (2016-2019 actual, 2020-2023 prediction)

Program	Year	Scholarships Awarded Cumulative Data			Placement/Enrollment Cumulative Data			Expected Graduation Cumulative Data			Remarks
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Master	2016	68	35	103	68	32	100	-	-	-	Actual
Master	2017	133	76	209	131	63	194	-	-	-	Actual
Master	2018	217	119	336	208	96	304	65	21	86	Actual
Master	2019	277	158	435	268	127	395	89	33	122	Actual
Master	2020	-	-	-	273	144	417	173	84	257	
Master	2021	-	-	-	-	-	-	205	93	298	Prediction
Master	2022	-	-	-	-	-	-	273	144	417	Prediction
Total Master		277	158	435	273	144	417	273	144	417	
PhD	2019	39	14	53	22	2	24	-	-	-	Annual Data
PhD	2020	-	-	-	39	14	53	-	-	-	Annual Data
PhD	2023-2024	-	-	-	-	-	-	39	14	53	Annual Data
Total PhD		39	14	53	39	14	53	39	14	53	Annual Data
Grand Total		316	172	488	312	158	470	311	158	464	

Note: The expected graduation figures are valid, if all pending students are placed at least by Feb 2020.

Placement of Pending Students (Master and PhD)

The program is now dealing with the placement of almost 74 academic members students (4 students of 2018 batch, 29 PhD and 41 Master degree students of 2019). It was predicted that a great portion of the pending students will be placed by 2019, but considering the academic schedules of the universities, it didn't go as planned. One of the challenges for the program was the placement of medical students of the last batches and the same for 2019. The program has found a suitable university (Al-Farabi)/Kazakhstan where 20 students were placed at October 2019. The program is yet to place 12 more medical students of 2018 and 2019 batches.

Table 3. Master and PhD student's placement plan, 2019.

Master Program Degree	Batch	Identified University	Time Table (Actual till Oct and Prediction till Feb)			Program Duration	Expected Graduation Date
			Jan	Feb	July		
Master Degree	2018 Batch	IIUM		1		2.5 Years	1- sep-22
		LPU			1	2 Years	1-July-22
		KATEB University		2		2.5 Years	1-Aug-22

2019 Batch	LPU			4	2.5 Years	1-No-22
	Indoor (Public Uni)		1		2.5 Years	1-Nov-22
	Al-Farabi		3		2 Years	1-Feb-22
	UTM	15	10		2.5 Years	1-Aug-22
	UPM	5			2.5 Years	1-Aug-22
	IUM	3			2.5 Years	1-Aug-22
	UiTM	1			2.5 Years	1-Aug-22
	Chaing mai Thailand			1	2.5 Years	1-Dec-22
	UTM	5	8		3 - 4 Years	2023
	UITM		1		3 - 4 Years	2023
	UPM		6		3 - 4 Years	2023
	MAHIDOL			4	3 - 4 Years	2023-2024
	IIT-Roorkee	1			3 - 4 Years	2023-2024
	IIT- Bombay	1			3 - 4 Years	2023-2024
	IIT- Kharagpur			1	3 - 4 Years	2023-2024
Total by Month	31	32	11	Grand Total	74	

Theme 1.3.2. Short-term Technical and Maintenance Courses for Technical Staff in Universities

In 2019, the program conducted three short term technical and maintenance trainings for almost 340 technicians (lab, library and IT technicians). The program has achieved the project end line target value for this thematic area (400 technical staff to be trained by 2022).

Based on the agreed actions of the recent WB mission, the program was required to conduct an impact assessment of these trainings. The program planned and conducted the study. The impact assessment report will be shared soon.

Theme 1.4: Strengthening Governance, Quality Assurance and Accreditation

Theme 1.4.1: Strategic Institutional Development Plans (SIDPs)

The MoHE SPIC has done a tremendous job in completing all the target set for the 2019 in terms of developing strategic plans. A total number of 25 universities were selected for 2019 to prepare their strategic institutional development plans. The MoHE SPIC put a great effort forth and got all the universities complete their SIDP's before the end of 2019. At the start of the 2019, all 25 universities were invited to MoHE to get trained on how to develop strategic institutional development plans and preparing annual progress report the annual progress towards the strategic objectives set out in their respective SIDP's. After the training, all the universities in question were helped by the MoHE-SPIC during the SIDP development process.

Additionally, it is noteworthy that the MoHE has delegated the approval of SIDP's to the universities' academic council. This said, the MoHE won't approve of universities' strategic plans anymore as it did in the past. All universities have to prepare their own strategic institutional development plans and get it approved by the university's academic council. However, the MoHE might provide technical support to universities in developing their SIDP's.

Lastly, it was discussed during the mission that a policy document should be developed to help the MoHE institutionalize the SIDP's and APR's at universities; hence, the committee have started their initial discussions about the policy document, but recently the focus of the entire committee has been shift towards the review and finalization of the SIDP's. The committee will resume working on the policy document once the SIDP's work is completed.

Annual Progress Reports (APR's)

This is a one-time activity, which usually takes place at the end of the year. Therefore, all 10 public universities who completed their SIDP's in previous year have been officially notified through the MoHE to send their APR's. To hold a workshop for their presentation, the HEDP in-charge manager is in communication with the MoHE relevant directorate to make it happen soon. During the (2018), 6

universities issued their annual progress reports on their SIDPs. These six universities who presented on their APR's were selected based on the target set for 2018 in the PIM. The program has achieved the target set for this theme for 2018 (6 APRs to be issued), and is on track to complete it for 2019.

Theme 1.4.2: Internal Quality Assurance

During the reporting period, the physical work of 9 IQAUs completed, while nine more IQAUs were established in 2017 and 2018. Now, cumulatively, the program has established 18 IQAUs. The work plan for quality assurance of 2020 has been developed and finalized. The OMST DLI verification conducted. According to the data received from universities, 10 IQAUs have been reported functional. With this the DLI target of 2020 (10) has been achieved.

As agreed in the previous mission that the IQAU scorecard should be revised and simplified because in the current scorecard, some of the criteria are ambiguous and sometimes misleading. The scorecard has been revised collaboratively with the stakeholders. OMST has invited three experienced IQAU Leads for a working meeting to revise the Scorecard. The revised scorecard was shared with World Bank team and the British Council for their insights and recommendations. The updated scorecard is shared with the colleagues TPV firm. The OMST DLI verification was conducted based on the revised scorecard.

Theme 1.4.3: External Quality Assurance

For external quality assurance or the accreditation, the program target is to review 30 universities in 2019. The OMST has achieved the year-end target and has already reviewed 42 universities. The universities reviewed includes 26 private and 16 publics. The UNESCO has conducted field visits and conducted multiple interviews with the stakeholders for the assessment of QAAD institutional assessment. The report is expected to be shared with MoHE by January 2020.

Table 4: Details of the universities reviewed.

S.#	University Type	Universities	Location	Current Stage	Accreditation Result	Remarks
1	Public	Kabul University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade A Accredited	
2	Public	Kabul Polytechnic University	Kabul	Reviewed	To be Focused Review	
3	Public	Balkh University	Balkh	Reviewed	To be Focused Review	
4	Public	Kandahar University	Kandahar	Reviewed	Grade A Accredited	
5	Private	Kateb University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade A Accredited	
6	Private	American University of Afghanistan	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade A Accredited	
7	Private	Kardan University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade A Accredited	
8	Private	Khatam-al- Nabiyeen	Kabul	Reviewed	To be Focused Review	
9	Public	Kabul Medical University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade A Accredited	
10	Public	Kabul Education University	Kabul	Reviewed	To be Focused Review	
11	Public	Sheikh Zayed University	Khost	Reviewed	To be Focused Review	
12	Public	Herat University	Herat	Reviewed	Grade A Accredited	
13	Public	Nangarhar University	Nangarhar	Reviewed	To be Focused Review	
14	Public	Takhar University	Takhar	Reviewed	To be Focused Review	
15	Private	RANA University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
16	Private	Ibne Sina University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
17	Private	Cheragh Medical Higher Education Institution	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
18	Private	Karwan University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
19	Private	Bakhtar University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
20	Private	Maryam University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
21	Private	Ghalib University Kabul	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
22	Private	Ghalib University Heart	Herat	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	

23	Private	Salaam University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
24	Public	Bamyan University	Bamyan	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
25	Public	Alberoni University	Kapisa	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
26	Public	Jawzjan University	Jawzjan	Reviewed	Grade C Accredited	
27	Public	Paktia University	Paktia	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
28	Public	Parwan University	Parwan	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
29	Public	Helmand University	Halmand	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
30	Private	Alfalah University	Nangarhar	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
31	Private	Khurshaid University	Kabul	Reviewed	To be Focused Review	
32	Private	Gharjistan University	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
33	Private	Maulana Jalulladin Mohammad Balkhi University	Balkh	Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
34	Private	Danish University	Parwan	Reviewed	Grade C Accredited	
35	Private	Pamir HEI		Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
36	Private	Gawharshad University		Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
37	Private	Jami HEI		Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
38	Private	Hewad University		Reviewed	Grade C Accredited	
39	Private	Malalay HEI		Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
40	Private	Al Taqwa	Nangarhar	Reviewed	Grade C Accredited	
41	Private	Edrak HEI		Reviewed	Grade B Accredited	
42	Private	Moraa HEI	Kabul	Reviewed	Grade C Accredited	

Theme 1.4.4: Leadership and Management Courses for Senior Managerial and Administrative Staff

During the period under review, the NRPs training was conducted at the NITTTR, India. Around 26 NRPs were trained and the domestic trainings are expected to be conducted in the first quarter of 2020. cumulatively the program has trained 271 senior academic staff under this thematic area, while the target was 275 by 2019. The program is a few number behind the target. It's expected that by 2020, a big number of senior academic staff will be trained.

The training was designed in a way that would provide the participants with both theoretical and practical skills. As part of the training, participants visited and met with different Indian universities' leadership and management teams. They learned about challenges in the universities and how they are addressed.

Theme 1.5: Stimulating Development Oriented Research (DLI)

The research work seems to be well ahead of the plan. After the establishment of the new research directorate and a highly qualified technical research committee, there has been significant progress. The Technical Research Committee started developing new policies, procedures and regulations for the review of research proposals before starting the review process for 2019 round of proposals. The committee also revised the scoring rubric and the research proposal selection criteria through a series of meetings before the review process.

For 2019, a total of 210 proposals were received from across the country for research grants, out of which 65 were individual research proposals and 145 were group proposals. With respect to female researchers, we had only 3 female individual proposals and a total of 55 female researchers involved in all group research proposals. The committee completed reviewing all these proposals with very much accuracy and each proposal was reviewed by at least 2 committee members. After the complete review, 55 best research proposals were selected, out of which 43 are individual research proposals and 12 are group. While selecting these proposals, the committee members were instructed to consider a balance by discipline and gender in addition to the proposals' quality.

After obtaining H.E minister's and World Bank's NoL, on December 24, 2019, a workshop was held at MoHE to officially award contracts to all 55 research grant winners. During the workshop, researchers were briefed on their responsibilities and the nature of research grants from HEDP, and they were also training

on the technical parts of carrying out a research. Hence as of now, HEDP has awarded 155 research projects to different public and private university's professors from 2016 up until 2019, and this exceeds the actual target set in the PIM, which is 140.

C) Component Two: Program Operations and Technical Support

Social and Environmental Safeguard

In the reporting period, there hasn't been a major progress on the social and safeguard issues of the program. Some issues have already been resolved, while still needs closure. The following issues of social and safeguards are at various stages.

1. Revision of the ESMP for the planned Bamiyan Slope stabilization project

An Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP) has prepared for the Bamiyan slope stabilization project and shared with the Bank safeguards team for review and approval. The mentioned report has been revised based on the guidance of the Bank's safeguard team. The mentioned document will be part of the contract for the proposed project.

2. Finalization of PAFs list

Since the second list has approved by all the relevant government stakeholders of the project which are Bamiyan Governor, Provincial Council, Municipality, and university management. The final report of the site visit along with the PAP list has been shared with the Bank. Thus a third party will be recruited by the Bank to further investigate the matter stated above.

1. Solar panels in Bamiyan

Based on the conducted negotiations only 90 solar panels are to be removed by the Brishna. Since the negotiations took place in the administrative meeting of the mentioned province, so that the Brishna is guided to shift and re-install the required solar panels. The deadline for relocation of the panels will be set by the end of next week.

2. Emergency Exits

According to the MSI report HEDP was to construct two emergency exits for the Takhar female dormitory project. Follow up made on the issue and we have officially requested MOHE to finance the mentioned activity from second component of HEDP. The mentioned activity will be performed by the admin and infrastructures directorate. They have talked to the previous contracted firm responsible for implementation of this project. The program has officially requested MoHE's procurement and infrastructure department to send all the relevant documents to the NPA for bidding.

3. Inauguration of the Takhar female dormitory

The female dormitory of Takhar University has inaugurated on 19th Dec 19 by the MOHE and HEDP senior management. The mentioned project is currently fully functionalized.

4. Safeguard monitoring report

Safeguard monitoring reports for the months of September and October have been shared with the WB safeguards team. According to the monthly reports six projects out of 14 are completed, four are ongoing while the physical progress of the remaining projects is stopped.

Physical Infrastructure Projects

During the reporting period, five large infrastructure projects were inaugurated and they are fully functional now.

- Bamiyan female hostel
- Kunar female hostel
- Takhar lecture block
- Herat research center
- Laghman research center

In addition to the above mentioned projects, during this reporting period, some other small projects have as well been inaugurated and are fully functional. They are: Child care centers at Takhar and Bamyan universities and Counselling Center at Balkh, Bamyan and Jawzjan universities. ICT centers of Takhar, Faryab, Paktia, Bamyan, KMU and ICT equipment of Helmand and Daikundi universities.

There have been 9 more major infrastructure projects as ongoing. They are at various percentages of physical works heading towards completion. The table xxx illustrates these projects.

Despite the progress as mentioned above, there have been four projects of which the physical work is stopped since last two/one year (s). they are the projects of Lecture Blocks with Large class rooms and small class rooms (Ghazni Provin), Lecture Blocks with Large class rooms and small class rooms (Logar Province), Research Center (Kabul University) and Lecture Blocks with Large class rooms and small class rooms (Wardak Prov). These projects need immediate attention of MoHE officials to resume the physical works of these projects and get them completed as soon as possible. These projects are reportedly being marked stopped in the last three reports.

Table 5: the physical progress of infrastructure projects, updated by July 2019.

S/N	Project Name	Start Date	Amended End Date	Vendor Name	Contract Amount	Paid Amount	Financial Progress (%)	Physical Progress (%)	Remaining Amount	Remarks
1	Lecture Blocks with Large class rooms and small class rooms (Ghazni Provin)	26-Sep-16	26-Sep-18	Faizi Mujadidi CC	AFA 74,587,561	AFA 69,823,738	93.6%	93%	AFA 4,763,823	The physical work is stopped since last winter. The contract extension is under process, once the firm receive the extension they will start the physical work
2	Lecture Blocks with Large class rooms and small class rooms (Sare-pul Prov)	17-Dec-16	6-Aug-19	Faizi Mujadidi CC	AFA 61,406,134	AFA 36,782,463	59.9%	90%	AFA 24,623,671	Work in Progress
3	Lecture Blocks with Large class rooms and small class rooms (Logar Province)	29-Dec-16	26-Feb-19	Dora CC	AFA 63,364,220	AFA 53,133,725	83.9%	80%	AFA 10,230,495	Due to the technical issues raised, the physical work is stopped
4	Establishment of Research Center (Kabul University)	18-Dec-16	17-Sep-17	Knowledge CC	AFA 23,645,899	AFA 14,176,236	60.0%	85%	AFA 9,469,663	The project is stopped since last two years
5	Establishment of Research Center (Kandahar University)	20-Feb-17	19-Nov-18	Lal Mohammad Maihan CC	AFA 22,284,009	AFA 20,205,611	95%	95%	AFA 2,078,398	Handed Over but not fully functional
6	Dormitories for female Students (Helmand Province)	5-Jun-17	10-Jun-19	Hayat Heldmandwall CC	AFA 39,287,297	AFA 33,170,105	48.4%	95%	AFA 6,117,192	Work in Progress
7	Lecture Blocks with Large class rooms and small class rooms (Parwan Prov)	11-Jul-17	11-Oct-18	Zahid Paktin CC	AFA 42,564,425	AFA 40,454,225	10%	100%	AFA 2,110,200	Handed Over but not fully functional
8	Lecture Blocks with Large class rooms and small class rooms (Wardak Prov)	3-Oct-17	31-Dec-18	Best Star CC	AFA 43,995,740	AFA 26,469,125	60.2%	60%	AFA 17,526,615	The physical work of the project is stopped since last winter
9	Dormitories for female Students (Badghis Province)	31-Aug-16	22-09-18	-	-	-	0	30%	-	

Procurement

During the period under review, the procurement unit of HEDP/MoHE was able to award the following five projects:

- Establishment of AfgREN NOC in Kabul University
- Establishment of ICT Center in KPU
- Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAUs) in KPU
- Water & Lavatories for Girls (Ali Abad teaching hospital)
- Counselling Center in Herat University

In addition to the above mentioned projects, the procurement unit of the program was engaged with the procurement directorate of MoHE to facilitate the procurement process of several HEDP funded projects.

It is worth mentioning that there have been four projects pending since long ago while the program has already gone half way through its life cycle. A decision needs to be made with respect to the implementation or dissolution of these projects. Below are the mentioned four projects with their status as of now.

- Library Books (24 Universities) => Rejected by NPC (National Procurement Committee) - Under Review (MoHE)
- Physics and Biology Kits (All Government Universities) => Under Review (MoHE)
- Lab equipment's (14 Universities) => Under Review (MoHE)
- Establishment of Creativity and Innovation Centers in KEU and KU

The MoHE's senior leadership can discuss with NPA on the technical issue regarding library books. Based on president's decree, NPA suggested establishing a digital library instead of procuring library books.

Financial Management

During the period under review, the FM team of the program was engaged in the process of receiving allotments, executing payments and updating the QuickBooks. Following tables and figures outline the budget execution rates at various program themes.

Table 6: Budget Execution Figures of the Program Fiscal Year 2019 as of December 2019

Grant	Budget	Expenditure(\$)	% Spent	Balance	Remarks
ARTF-Component 1	\$ 8,736,559.14	\$7,935,659	91%	\$800,900	
ARTF-Component 2	\$ 1,680,107.53	\$1,577,779	94%	\$102,329	
Total	\$ 10,416,666.67	\$9,513,438	91%	\$903,229	

In the midterm review, the program decreased its budget due to some activities which were planned, postponed to 2020. The budget decrease is as follows;

Component One: USD 308,304

Component Two: USD 380,798

Human Resource Management

During the reporting period, the human resource management of program continued on filling the vacant position and extension of the contracts of existed employees. Following positions have been at various processes of recruitments. The Social safeguard specialist, pending since long ago, was eventually integrated to the existed Environmental Safeguard Specialist. The new position has been named as "Environmental and Social Safeguard Specialist". The incumbent will carry on both environmental and social aspects for the program.

Table 7: The positions in the recruitment processes during the last two months.

S/N	Name of Position	Recruitment Process				Expected date to get onboard
		Announced/Re-announced	Test and Interview Conducted	NoL with WB	On board	
1	Environmental and Social Safeguard Specialist				√	
2	University Operations Coordinator (Parwan, KEU, Bamyan and Badakhshan)				√	
3	Curriculum Development Advisor	√				TBC soon
4	OMST Director				√	
5	HR Specialist			√		Early January
6	HR Officer (Re announced)		√			End January
7	Logistic Assistant		√			End January
8	Senior Finance Officer		√			End January
9	Finance Assistant			√		End January
10	6 Interns				√	
11	Senior Quality Assurance Manager	√				

Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E team as unusual, continued on collecting the data on key indicators, and provide insight to the program management for the informed decision making. During the reporting period, the M&E unit of the program conducted DLIs verification study. According to the data received from the universities, the DLIs target value for IQAUs and OBE-SCL have been achieved, while ICT is marked not achieved. The data reveals that 10 IQAUs have been functional out of total 18 IQAUs reviewed. Six ICTs have been functional, while the target is to have 7 functional ICT centers by December 21, 2019. The main reason of not achieving this target is lack of adequate technicians at universities, we have been following with MoHE to hire the technicians where needed. It's expected that by the time TPV goes to these universities, the technicians will be hired and these universities will get functionality status. The number of verified OBE-SCL trainees and those who are practicing is still under review. The DLI verification report will be shared soon.

The M&E team is as well following with TPV firm on DLIs verification. The firm has submitted the inception report and has gone to the second phase of the project (DLIs Verification). In addition, the M&E team as well conducted the impact study on short term technical and maintenance trainings. The impact assessment report will be shared soon.

D) Challenges and Recommendations

- Scholarships: some of our beneficiaries have requested for 6th and 7th semester sponsorship, which exceeds the study period that HEDP has initially planned. Sponsoring beneficiaries' sixth and seventh semester will incur fiduciary challenges for the project. Therefore, it is recommended that joint monitoring missions be conducted to see what could be the reason behind the prolonged period of study and what can be done to address the challenges. The relevant universities and beneficiaries should be met to seek clarifications on the issue.
- Procurement- There have been four projects pending since long ago. The NPA has put some observations which needs to be discussed in MoHE high leadership level. This problem persists for almost one year.

- With respect to the physical infrastructure projects, the physical work of four projects have been stopped since last winter. There have been the contract extension issues along with others too. The MoHE and the project management to take great care to this issue and resume the physical work of these projects.
- The program is challenged by the delay happened in the implementation of ongoing infrastructure projects. The amended dates of the projects indicate that almost all projects contracts are terminated by now, while there are a significant number of the projects which are not completed yet.

Annex A: Intermediate Outcome Indicators Status for 2019 based on the revised PIM

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2019 Targets</i>	<i>Current Status as December 2019</i>
A.		
1. Student enrollment in universities in priority degree programs for economic development	Total: 80,500 Males: 65,000 Females:15,500	Total: 88,159 Males: 68,231 Females: 19,928
2. Number of universities developing, implementing and monitoring strategic five year rolling institutional development plans consistent with the National Higher Education Strategic Plan.	14 universities issue Strategic Institutional Development Plans according to the template	25 universities issued Strategic Institutional Development Plans.
3. Increased numbers of full time academic staff with at least a Master's degree in priority degree programs	1,300.00	1700 with 225 females and 1465 males by April 2019
A.		
Female enrollment in priority degree programs in the 1st year of public universities [DLI 1]	5,000 by end of December 2019	5,897 first year female students are enrolled.
Number of female students with access to adequate residential facilities for women on university campuses	4,250	5,664 by December 2019
Number of full time academic staff trained in, and practicing, outcome-based education and student centered learning [DLI 2]	750 academic staff trained in and practicing outcome-based education and student centered learning	1,846 academic staff have been trained and verified. While 1,200 academic staff practice OBE and SCL by the end of 2018. The 2019 verification is still underway.
Number of public universities with functional ICT centers for ICT based higher education [DLI 3]	7 universities with new and functional ICT centers	Based on the OMST DLI verification report, 6 ICTs have been reported functional. 11 ICTs established.
Number of scholarships awarded to full time faculty staff for Masters Degrees in priority disciplines [DLI 4]	450 scholarships awarded	488 scholarships awarded. 435 Master degree scholarships awarded; 53 PhD Scholarships awarded. 120 master scholarships completed and returned

Number of technical staff completing short-term technical and maintenance courses	250 staff trained	446 technical staff trained
Number of universities with Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAUs) (b) functioning to international standards [DLI 5]	10 universities with IQAUs functioning to international standards	Based on the OMST DLI verification report, 10 IQAUs reported functional. 18 IQAUs established.
Number of public and private universities which complete a new regionally benchmarked quality assurance cycle	External institutional quality assurance reviews completed for 15 public and 15 private universities and reports disseminated by the MoHE	16 publics and 26 private universities externally reviewed.
Number of university senior managerial and administrative staff completing short-term leadership and management courses in the context of greater authority and accountability	275 staff trained	271 Senior Academic Staff trained. 245 in 2017 and 26 now at NITTTR.
Development oriented research Projects, mainly in the priority disciplines [DLI # 6]	10 new group research Projects commenced 20 new individual research Projects commenced At least 25 group research Projects completed At least 50 individual research Projects completed	12 New Group research projects awarded, 43 Individual research projects awarded 25 Group research projects of 2017 completed 52 Individual research projects of 2017 completed