



Ministry of Education

General Directorate of Planning and Evaluation

Strategic Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate

Research and Evaluation Unit

## EDUCATION JOINT SECTOR REVIEW 2018



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## ABBREVIATIONS

AAN	Afghan Analysts Network
ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AFC	Afghan Children Read
AFN	Afghani (currency)
AFMIS	Afghanistan Financial Management Information System
AFN	Afghani (Afghanistan currency)
AGO	Attorney General Office
ALC	Accelerated Learning Class
AOGs	Armed Opposition Groups
ANPDF	Afghan National Peace and Development Framework
AREU	Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit
ARTF	Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund
AS	Academic Supervision
ASDP	Afghan Skills Development Program
AWEC	Afghan Women Education Centre
CBA	Capacity Building Activity
CBE	Community Based Education
CBS	Community-Based Schooling
CBR	Capacity Building for Results
CCNPP	Citizens' Charter National Priority Program
CCP	Citizens' Charter Program
CDC	Community Development Council
CFS	Child-friendly schools
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRC	Convention on the Right of the Child
CSO	Central Statistics Organization/Office
DAARTT	Danish Assistance to Afghan Rehabilitation and Technical Training
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DCT	Direct cash transfer
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DED	District Education Department
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
DP	Development Partner
DPG	Development Partners Group
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early child development

ECW	Education Cannot Wait
EFA	Education for All
EiE	Education in Emergencies
EiEWG	Education in Emergencies Working Group
EIEWG SAG	Education in Emergencies Working Group Strategic Advisory Group
ELCG	Education Local Coordination Group
EMIS	Education Information Management System
EOI	Expression of Interest
EQUIP	Education Quality Improvement Programme
EQRA	Education Quality Reform in Afghanistan
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
GDHR	General Directorate for Human Resources
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDPP	General Directorate for Planning and Policy
GE	General Education
GNP	Gross National Product
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GBV	Gender-based violence
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRMIS	Human Resource Development Management Information System
IARCS	Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission
ID	Identification Document
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
ICT	information and communication technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IE	Islamic Education
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INEE	Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies
INSET	In-Service Teacher Education Training
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JOP	Joint Operating Procedure
LAD	Learning Assessment Directorate
LaNA	Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
MBE	Mosque Based Education
MEC	Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
MEC	Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
MICS	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey
MIS	Management information System

MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MoRR	Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
MTEG	Monitoring Trends in Educational Growth
MTR	Mid-term review
MVCA	Ministry-wide Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment of the Ministry of Education
MYP	Education Cannot Wait Facilitated Multi-Year Programme
NAFA	National Assessment Framework for Afghanistan
NCA	Norwegian Afghanistan Committee
NESP III	National Education Strategic Plan (2017-21)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPPs	National Priority Programmes
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NTA	National Technical Assistance
NUG	National Unity Government
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<i>Ostaz-Shegari</i>	– the traditional craft apprenticeship system
O&M	Operations & Maintenance
OOSC	Out of School Children
PCA	Programme Cooperation Agreement
PED	Provincial Education Department
PED	Provincial Education Directorates
PEDP	Primary Education Development Programme
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Program for International Students Assessment
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
P&G	Pay and Grade
RBM	Results-based management
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER)
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
SCI	Save the Children International
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
Shura	A school <i>shura</i> refers to a school committee typically made up of a combination of parents, community religious leaders, elders and teachers
SMS	School Management Shura
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
TA	Technical Assistant – individual funded by DPs but working at MoE
TAF	The Asia Foundation

Tashkiel	<i>The Tashkiel represents the total number salaried positions that any ministry is permitted to appoint. It is determined by the Ministry of Finance and conveyed to respective ministries to implement</i>
TE	Teacher Education
TED	Teacher Education Directorate
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
TTC	Teacher Training College /Centre
TVET	Technical Vocational Training and Education
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nation Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCA	Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment
WADAN	Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1397/2018 EJSR looks at progress against the NESP III objectives and is designed to cover the three pillars of NESP-III (Quality, Access and Management). It covers all MoE programmes (General Education, Islamic Education, teacher training, curriculum, TVET and literacy). This 2018 EJSR report has also identified a number of focus areas for in-depth scrutiny.

Since 2001 the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA) has made significant achievements with the support of the Development Partners (DPs) in rebuilding Afghanistan's education system. The number of children in school has risen by almost nine times. There were more than 9.6 million students in 1397 (2018), of which 38 % were girls. The number of private school students comprise 5.5 % of total enrolment. The number of educational centres (all programmes) has increased from 3,400 to 18,073 in 1397/2018. School Shuras have played a key role in community participation in the education of children at the local level. Average pass rates in 1396/2017 stood at 66% for both sexes.

While education reform and rehabilitation has made remarkable progress over the last 15 years, a considerable gap remains in terms of access and quality improvement between provinces and between urban and rural areas. The availability of female teachers, a key intervention strategy for NESP III, is on average 36% nationwide. However, the range from 1.8% to 74% is clearly emphasizing the need for greater attention to sub-national, local priorities, and also to adapt strategies to local needs.

Significant progress has been achieved in curriculum development, while the provision of textbooks and teaching/learning materials is grossly inadequate. There are huge discrepancies in the availability of books and learning materials between government and private schools. Private schools have much better provision. The imbalance is illustrated by the proportion of schools with a computer room: 7% of government schools, 82% of private schools.

*General education:* Progress against the 1397 operational objectives in access was good as regards increasing the number of new entrants, and in constructing science centres. Less satisfactory, were results in establishing new schools and upgrading primary schools to secondary, and secondary to high schools, performance was only slightly better where MOE wanted to establish attached classes. In quality, the targets for development and distribution of math kits and labs tables were satisfactorily achieved. The operational targets in the governance field in school supervision and recruitment of contract teachers were almost fully achieved, while establishment of school councils and school improvement plans was less satisfactory.

*Islamic education:* The operational access targets for Islamic Education focused on increasing enrolment, and food and accommodation beneficiaries, where good progress was achieved in the number of male students, but less so for female students. Progress in the establishment of new institutions, and on construction of buildings and dormitories was less satisfactory. Good progress

was achieved in the development and distribution of math kits and the number of trained teachers and supervisors. Governance targets in IE (recruitment of teachers) were achieved.

*Teacher training:* Performance in the number of teachers trained in INSET and the number of private TTCs was poor. Performance in quality TE targets in textbooks, teacher assessment and training was very poor. The TE governance targets concerned with recruitment of TTC teaching faculties were achieved but not in monitoring of training centres.

*Technical and vocational education:* The National Unity Government (NUG) leadership decided to make TVET an Independent Technical & Vocational Education and Training Board. IARCSC has been assigned to develop the concept of a new TVET structure. The TVET access targets were achieved one third or less. They focused on enrolment, entrants in teacher-student courses, number of vocational courses and beneficiaries from food and accommodation facilities. The TVET quality targets were achieved to a considerable degree. They focused on equipment of schools, on number and standards for curriculum development, assessment, teachers trained as well as textbooks and teacher guides distributed. The TVET governance targets concerned with recruitment of teachers were achieved, but less so in monitoring of schools and institutes.

*Literacy program:* The number of literacy learners has been almost stagnant, between 18,000–21,000, during four years and it is insignificant in relation to needs and despite explicit political attention to the importance of increasing its coverage. The number of female learners went down in 1396. Performance in literacy was 69% (57% F) in enrolment, number of literacy courses 83% and 43% beneficiaries from vocational education. This performance may not look particularly bad in itself, but the target numbers relative to need appear to be extremely low. Literacy quality targets were concerned with academic training of teachers (49% achieved), number of textbooks for literacy and vocational courses (only 14 %) as well as progress in curriculum and textbook development (100%). Literacy governance targets concerned with supervision of courses were achieved 62% but no contract teachers were recruited:

*Educational governance:* There has been considerable progress within the operational targets for educational governance. They focused on the development of district operational plans, on MOUs. In addition, it focused on staff training and recruitment, and on MOE organizational restructuring. Little progress, however, in the development of provincial plans (7%) and on the amount of land donated for teachers' townships (9%).

The key challenges affecting MoE service delivery are as follows:

Security issues: in some areas, the schools are closed due to security issues, and teachers, girls' students, MoE supervision teams are not allowed to the areas. School buildings are destroyed. Students are threatened, killed and prevented from going to school.

Insufficient budget: MoE is the only government entity which has about 67% of all civil servants in the country. The allocation budget for this ministry is not enough because it doesn't respond to



the current needs of MoE. The salary of teachers is very low, there isn't enough equipment and tools, there isn't enough budget to build school buildings and equip them based on the needs. Social and cultural issue: There are areas where the family doesn't allow their girls to participate in school due to social and cultural issues.

Lack of female teachers in local areas: due to security and social and cultural issues MoE is not able to find and recruit enough female teachers for local areas. Consequently, the majority of girls are prevented from going to school.

Insufficient formal (within Tashkeel) teachers: while the current Tashkeel of MoE is the biggest government entity with about 67% civil servants, it is not enough. In many schools, more than 40% of teachers are contracted and they are not in Tashkeel. Insufficient technical and professional qualification of teachers in remote local areas

Lack of standard buildings for schools: More than 46% of functioning schools in the country do not have basic and standard buildings (EMIS, 1397)

The year 2018 marks the initiation of a comprehensive and ambitious education reform agenda for the Ministry of Education. MOE will try to shift from a program-based approach of service delivery to a more holistic and priority-based approach specially to accommodate the SDG requirements. The shift in approach will require a complete change in the administration and structure of the education system. Key elements of the reform are:

- A structural reform of MOE and rationalizing what has been called an “overcrowded” structure.
- Decentralisation and higher involvement of the local community and civil society in the supervision and implementation of educational service delivery
- A Focus on educational core functions and the outsourcing of other auxiliary functions
- An Automation of processes and procedures
- Corruption prevention and Increased transparency and accountability
- A more equitable and inclusive education provision
- At school level the reform will manifest itself in increased civil society participation in supervision and management of education service delivery as well as in the recruitment of teachers.
- A large number of functions, which were centrally implemented before, will increasingly be decentralised to district and school level.

In Afghanistan, there are approximately 3.7 million out-of-school-children (OOSC). Estimates suggest that between 60.0% -75% of OOSC are girls. Gender is one of the main disparities impacting the lives of children. There are multiple reasons for non-attendance, including poverty, damaged and inadequate numbers of classrooms, shortage of teachers (especially female teachers) and relevant learning and teaching resources, lack of inclusive facilities at schools, cultural norms which deprioritize education for girls and long distances to schools for many

children. All of these challenges have been exacerbated by the protracted emergency situation, combined with the prevalence of natural disasters and climate change impacts

Improving and expanding girls' education could be facilitated by:

- Developing concrete rationale in favour of girls' education
- Supporting the eradication of child marriage
- Targeting provinces with disproportionate high rates of out-of-school girls
- Ensuring girls' learning facilities meet basic security and health standards
- Recruiting and training female teachers

It is estimated that up to 4% of the Afghan population live with some form of disability, that there are 800,000 children with special needs 95% of whom are deprived from education programs. The Current EMIS, however, capturing the number and distribution of disabled students but not by type of disabilities, as well as there is no clear definition of disability. The MOE has an Inclusive and Child-Friendly Education Policy, the purpose of which is to make all schools in Afghanistan inclusive and child-friendly and responsive to the learning needs of all children. The current reality is, however, that existing school buildings, the curriculum and teachers may not yet be able to respond to the needs of the disabled students.

*Vulnerable children: Internally Displaced and Returnees:* Due to the insecurity in some provinces and also the asylum situation in the two neighbouring countries of Pakistan and Iran, the number of IDPs and returnees in the past two years has increased dramatically. On one side, returnees and IDPs children are enrolled to school where capacity exist. On the other side, however, returnees and IDPs children are not enrolled to schools due to perceived notion of lack of required documentation; economic constraints - inability to afford education associated costs; distance to schools; capacity of schools/education centres to absorb additional students; lack of female teachers, language and cultural barriers

*Adult learning:* A large proportion of adult Afghans are illiterate. In 2016, less than 50% of men above the age of 28 were able to read and write. The corresponding figure for women was 10 %. In spite of continued attention to the importance of addressing low levels of literacy, the rates, however, remain low, the organisational setup incoherent and resources inadequate. The number of literacy learners has been almost stagnant, between 18,000 – 21,000, during four years and it is insignificant in relation to needs.

*Teachers:* The national pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) rose from 45 in 2011, to 42 in 2018. There has been progress, but uneven growth and large inequity in teacher provision. There are more than a quarter of a million teachers but on a variety of contracts. Formal qualifications and teaching competencies do not always correspond and they are not systematically assessed. Half of teachers are severely underqualified. One third of teachers are female but most work in big cities. Targeted female recruitment is the most effective tool to increase women into the teacher workforce, but

the selection method will potentially result in a significant loss of qualified and willing candidates. There is little renewal of the teacher work force because teachers tend to stay on payroll and attrition rates are low;

*Curriculum and Textbooks:* The previous curriculum was too large and the teaching hours were too short, both being vulnerabilities to corruption. MoE has now revised the curriculum framework, including specification that the textbooks for each grade would be reduced. An MoU for alignment of curricula of schools, TTCs and Universities has been developed and signed. A new Afghan curriculum based on three competency areas has been developed. A process has started to develop syllabi in 9 areas of learning: culture, sciences, languages, arts, sports, math, and social studies. The syllabi are all competency based and practical. The number of subjects and their volumes are reduced in the new curriculum by integration of subjects and avoiding duplication. The general lack of textbooks in schools is a serious challenge and there has been no improvements in the situation. Some students complain that they had not received books from MoE for the past four years. MEC observed that private schools in the surveyed locations have enough textbooks. Books intended for MoE schools are being sold to private schools.

*Building Public and Stakeholder Trust:* In the wake of the Ministry-wide Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment of the Ministry of Education (MVCA )report on corruption in MOE, a key challenge has been to re-establish public trust in the education system. In order to mitigate the situation MOE has embarked on four different types of interventions: 1) a radical transformation of the MOE to rationalize its organisational structure; 2) an ambitious reform programme in order to increase effectiveness and efficiency; 3) a comprehensive public communication policy, and 4) a robust feed-back and complaints handling mechanism for service users and stakeholders.

*Recruitment Process:* In the past years, merit-based recruitment of new teachers was found to have been significantly undermined by nepotism and corruption. Until 2018, teacher recruitment was managed and implemented at the provincial level. PEDs openly deviated from national civil service regulations, and the recruitment process appeared to be vulnerable to corruption at almost every step. Following a presidential decree, the whole recruitment process of teachers was radically transformed and the main responsibility transferred to the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC.)

*Integration and Automation of Information Systems (EMIS, Payroll, HRMIS):* Ministry of Education in the past several years, has developed different information management systems to enhance activities related to data management, systems like HRMIS, TVETMIS, EMIS, and TMIS. Also, the MoE has other data systems for Tashkeel and payroll but they are not coordinated with each other. In order to tackle the challenges like duplication and redundancy of data, waste of time and inaccurate reports, the Ministry of Education is planning to develop a comprehensive data system called Human Resource, Payroll Management Information System (HP-MIS). Currently, Ministry of Education has two different types of MIS in HR directorate. The first one HRMIS is processing and

recording the personal information of employees. The second type of MIS is SDMIS (Structure Development Management Information System). It records and processes the information related to the structure of Ministry of Education.

*Corruption:* In 2017, a devastating report from the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) on Ministry Wide Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment of the Ministry of Education attracted wide spread attention in Afghanistan and internationally. The assessment pointed to 36 different types of corruption within the education sector, highlighting that corruption has become endemic in the last 10 to 15 years and that malpractice is systemic within the ministry.

In response to the MEC report on corruption, a number of interventions have been launched. The Ministry of Education based on the national strategy of combatting the corruption has developed an action plan and established a committee for implementation of the action plan. The action plan for FY2018 is developed in light of the corruption strategy and the directive from the President.

The vulnerable points for corruptions are identified as: teacher recruitment, school management, teacher training colleges, curriculum and textbooks, provincial and district management, data management, academic supervision and inspection, procurement, and salary and archive system.

46% of functioning government schools are without appropriate buildings in 1397. Based on a Presidential Decree the responsibility for construction of schools in rural areas has been shifted from MoE to MoRRD. MoRRD inform that they in partnership with the Ministry of Education should build 6000 schools within the next two years (1397-1398). The cost of these projects will be funded by the World Bank through the new EQRA Project.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education with support from its development partners has initiated and implemented several education programs and projects during the last 15 years. The Education Joint Sector Review (EJSR) has since 1391/2012 served as one of the key tools to measure progress in the education sector. EJSR is a process in which the MoE reviews the main programs and projects and highlights progress and achievement against goals and objectives stated in its strategic and operational plans and also the challenges and shares its findings with stakeholders.

The purpose of the EJSR is to identify critical policy and implementation issues and reach consensus on practical solutions to providing equitable access to schooling, delivery of relevant quality teaching and learning, and establishing “good governance” in the education sector. The EJSR report findings serve as technical inputs for educational policy and planning.

The 1397/2018 EJSR looks at progress against the NESP III objectives and is designed to cover the three pillars of NESP-III (Quality, Access and Management). It covers all MoE programmes (General Education, Islamic Education, teacher training, curriculum, TVET and literacy).

The EJSR is structured in six chapters, the first three of which offer the introduction, methodology, and policy and macro-economic framework. Chapter four looks at overall progress made including the statistical trends and achievements against 1397 objectives, as well as challenges to the education sector. Chapter five provides a brief summary of education reform, and chapter six offers a review of 10 focus areas, which have been identified this year for in-depth scrutiny.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

The process is led by MOE and the approach is participatory and consultative with development partners and including MoE programmes at national and sub-national levels.

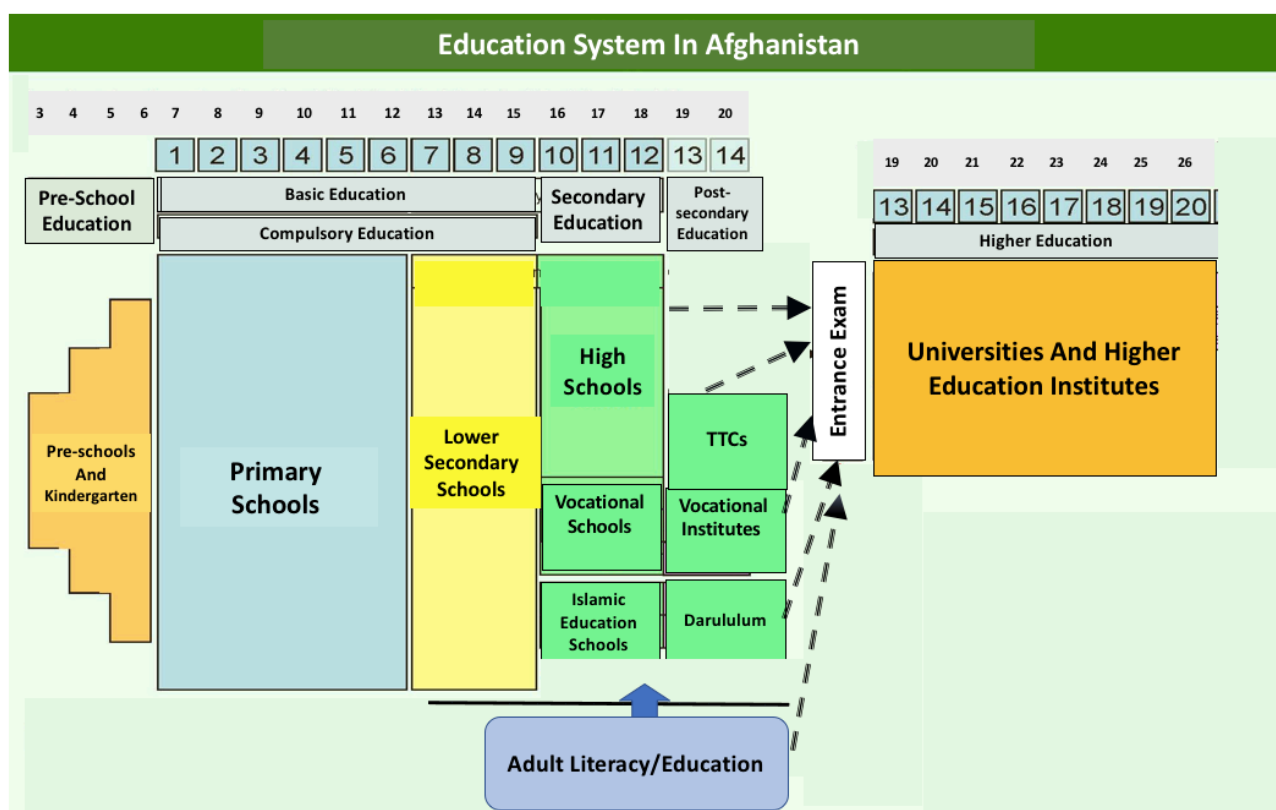
The methodology comprised three stages:

- **Desk review:** A literature review of the existing EJSR related analytical documents and analysis of MOE EMIS statistical data. This was done by an international consultant in collaboration with an MOE designated team from the Directorate of Strategic Monitoring and Evaluation
- **Field visits to programs and projects:** Empirical data were collected from a sample of visits to four provinces of Laghman, Herat, Kandahar, Samangan (two districts in each and the center of the provinces). The review field teams visited schools, CBEs, madrasas, TTCs, TVET schools and institutions, literacy schools and courses and other NGO projects. In order to review focus area like IDPs and returnees, the team also visited four provinces of Balkh, Nangarhar, Faryab, Badakhshan.
- **Report writing and preparing action plan:** The final EJSR report is based on the desk review, inputs from the field mission reports and MoE available data. Also an action plan will be developed to track and follow up the EJSR recommendation for next year.

### 3 POLICY AND MACRO-ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of Afghanistan follows international conventions in declaring education as a right for all citizens, and the 2008 Education Law makes primary and lower secondary education mandatory. Education has been a priority of the government and foreign donors and organizations since the fall of the Taliban, resulting in visible increases in school attendance and literacy since 2002. That being said, millions of children remain out of school and significant barriers remain to universal access to education.

Currently, Afghanistan's education system is formally managed by three separate entities, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) and religious institutions. In addition to public education providers, private education institutions, various national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) offer educational opportunities throughout the country. While these education delivery systems are officially under the authority of the central government, some alternative methods of delivering education to youth in Afghanistan continue to operate independently of the central government and allow for addressing some of the gaps in the current system.



Source: MoE/R&EU (2018)

Afghanistan's formal education system includes primary schooling (Grade 1–6), lower secondary school (Grade 7–9), upper secondary school (Grade 10–12) and various types of vocational centres (TTCs and technical schools) under the leadership of the MoE. Generally, ages of students are 7–12 years for primary, 13–15 years for lower secondary and 16–18 years in upper secondary schools.

After graduating secondary school, students have to take an entry exam (the *Kankor*) to enter tertiary education, which is managed by the Ministry of Higher Education. The MoHE oversees the delivery of tertiary education in all universities. Tertiary education includes three levels – bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctorate.

Afghanistan's educational system is highly dependent on the support of other actors for the delivery of education to the broadest number of children. This includes support through MoE infrastructure to existing schools and the creation of/support for systems of education designed to complete the official public school system. It includes elements such as community-based education (CBE), accelerated learning programmes to allow students delayed in their education to join their age group, and early childhood education (ECE) programmes (currently not provided by the government).

Global initiatives including the Global Partnership for Education and Girls' Education Challenge, supported by Afghanistan-specific initiatives such as the Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP), have supported the growth of Afghanistan's education system in line with other countries.

### NESP III

NESP III, the National Education Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021 is the third of MOE's five-year strategic plans for the education sector. NESP III specifies the strategic objectives identified by the MoE reform committee. The main five reform areas; strengthening HR Directorate, establishing a comprehensive ERP, privatizing of printing and distribution of textbooks, implementing SBM, and strengthening and encouraging the private education are already addressed in NESP III and an operational plan has been prepared.

The priority of the government is to complete the building of more schools, to improve the quality and relevance of programmes, and to prepare graduates better for productive work. The developmental objectives of MoE framed in strategic five-year plans (NESP I – III) demonstrate how MOE intends to achieve the goals and objectives for the upcoming years. For implementation of the NESP indicators, frameworks, and operational plans are provided to ensure the effectiveness of implementation. Based on NESP III, over the next 5 years, the Ministry of Education aims to increase the current low primary attendance and improve secondary school enrolments, especially for poor and disadvantaged children in rural areas, where only 21% of girls and 43% of boys attend school. It will streamline Ministry operations, improve the efficiency and

harmonization of donor funding and strengthen program management. A major challenge is to improve data collection, reporting and analysis, especially in addressing differential performance across the country.

During the plan period, the Ministry of Education aims to increase current low primary attendance and improve secondary school enrolments especially for poor and disadvantaged children in rural areas where only 21% of girls and 43% of boys attend school. It will streamline Ministry operations, improving the efficiency and harmonisation of donor funding and strengthen programme management. A major challenge is to improve data collection, reporting and analysis especially in addressing differential performance across the country.

The common Goal of the Strategic Plan is to prepare skilled and competent citizens through the education system to sustain Afghanistan's socioeconomic development and social cohesion. The strategic framework of NESP III is based on a number of high-level policy objectives and outcomes structured upon the three major components Quality and Relevance, Equitable Access, and Efficient and Transparent Management:

The theory of change specifies the strategies and the logic of various interventions intended to contribute to realising the objectives. A sector monitoring matrix links the major components and long-term outcomes with output indicators and annual quantified targets. The matrix also presents means of verification and responsibilities for reporting. NESP III is the major reference point for the EJSR 2018.

## MACROECONOMIC OUTLOOK<sup>1</sup>

Afghanistan economic growth has declined from an average 9.6% in 1389-1393 to 3.7% and 1.3% in 1393 and 1394 respectively. The economic growth increased from 2 % in FY 1395 to 2.9 in FY 1396<sup>2</sup>

The Government proposes to slowly phase out donor support to key Government operations, bringing more on budget, and ensuring that the domestic revenues grow at a rate fast enough to cover operational expenditure in the long term. This is in line with the long run aim of covering the security expenditure fully by 2024.

**Medium Term Budget Outlook** The final national budget in 1396 was Afs. 417.1 Bn. Of the total envelope, domestic resources constitute around 37 percent amounting to Afs 152.5 billion. About

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<sup>1</sup> Based on MOF: National Budget Document Fiscal Year 1395. Annual Budget 1395/2016

<sup>2</sup> 1396 Macro Fiscal Performance Report, MOF



Afs 258.8 billion equivalent to 62 % will come from donor grants, out of which Afs. 150.795 billion will be allocated to operating expenditures and Afs. 150.317 billion for development expenditures.

The national budget in FY 1396 was Afs 429.4 Bn. Operating expenditures were 268.4 Bn. (62.5 %) and development expenditures amounted to Afs 161 Bn. (37.4%)<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 1. National Budget (Operating and Development) 1395/2016 – 1399/2020**

Sectors	1395		1396		1397		1398		1399	
	Opt	Dev	Opt	Dev	Opt	Dev	Opt	Dev	Opt	Dev
Amounts in mln Afs										
Security	178,447	1,574	162,404	284	171,986	292	180,070	298	187,092	306
Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights	15,520	2,119	14,913	230	15,792	238	16,535	244	17,179	250
Infrastructure and Natural Resources	3,490	81,118	3,615	11,572	3,829	11,985	4,009	12,283	4,165	12,597
Education	37,472	19,245	38,593	1,838	40,870	1,904	42,791	1,951	44,460	2,001
Health	2,968	17,117	3,580	3,423	3,791	3,546	3,969	3,634	4,124	3,727
Agriculture and Rural Development	2,091	7,016	2,266	7,735	2,400	8,011	2,513	8,210	2,611	8,420
Social Protection	2,457	1,836	2,591	292	2,744	302	2,873	310	2,985	318
Economic Governance and Private Sector Development	3,143	7,184	3,163	538	3,350	558	3,507	572	3,644	586
Contingency Codes	47,700	5,051	49,041	4,865	48,559	4,966	48,999	5,090	46,485	5,220
<b>Total</b>	<b>293,288</b>	<b>162,260</b>	<b>280,166</b>	<b>30,777</b>	<b>293,321</b>	<b>31,802</b>	<b>305,266</b>	<b>32,592</b>	<b>312,745</b>	<b>33,425</b>

From: Afghanistan Pre-Budget Document (MTBF – Macro Fiscal Outlook) 1393-1399

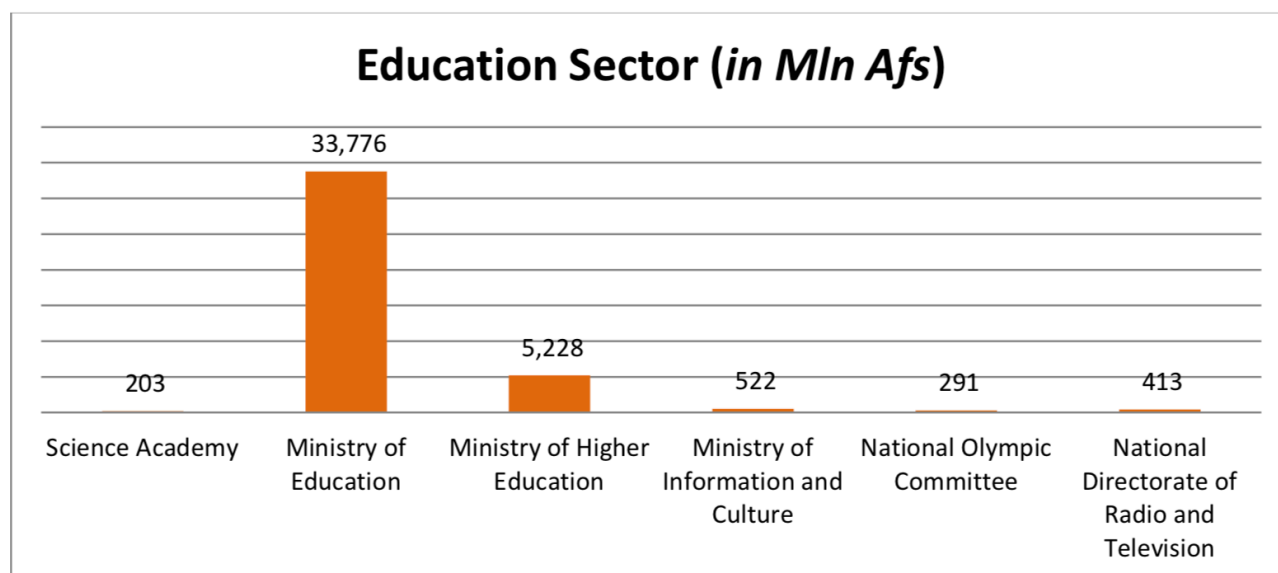
The total budget ceiling for Education sector amounts to AFS 40.431 billion which makes up 13% of the total National Budget. The operating budget makes the largest portion of this sector's budget (AFS 38.593 billion). Development budget ceiling for this sector is AFS 1.838 billion. AFS 42.774 billion, 44.472 and AFS 46.461 billion are the budget ceilings for 1397, 1398 and 1399 respectively. The Education Sector expenditure is mostly committed for the ministries of Education and Higher Education accounting for 4.4 percent of the GDP. Most of the amount of the Education budget is spent on paying salaries of the school teacher's and lecturers of the higher education sector, development of the educational curriculums and establishment of infrastructures and building for education and higher education facilities.

<sup>3</sup> 1396 Macro Fiscal Performance Report, MOF

Table 2. Education sector budget

EDUCATION	1395	1396	1397	1398	1399
Science Academy	223	203	214	225	233
Ministry of Education	46107	33776	35734	37379	38816
Ministry of Higher Education	8358	5228	5528	5780	6000
Ministry of Information and Culture	856	522	553	579	601
National Olympic Committee	626	291	308	322	335
National Directorate of Radio and Television	547	413	437	457	475
<b>Total</b>	<b>58112</b>	<b>40433</b>	<b>42774</b>	<b>44742</b>	<b>46460</b>

83.5% of the 1396 education sector budget - was allocated to the Ministry of Education while Ministry of Higher Education got 12.9 %.



Source: MTBF: p21

Official MOE data on population and enrolment shows a decrease in the proportion of school students relative to the overall population over a three-year period. This should be a cause of concern as the opposite trend were to be expected in light of the “youth heavy” population.

Table 3. Population and enrolment

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>Population data</b>	27,523,100	28,348,793	29,199,257	30,075,234	30,977,492	31,575,018
<b>GDP per capita</b>	43,481	43075	43153	45661	45725	
<b>Enrolment</b>	8,457,098	8,800,554	8,872,176	8,954,197	9,136,139	9,675,397
<b>Enrolment/population</b>	31%	31%	30%	30%	29%	31%

Source: MOE/EMIS

#### 4 OVERALL PROGRESS MADE AND CHALLENGES TO THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Overall Progress<sup>4</sup>: Since 2001 the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA) has made significant achievements with the support of the Development Partners (DPs) in rebuilding Afghanistan's education system. The number of children in school has risen by almost nine times. There were more than 9.6 million students in 2018, of which 38% are girls. The number of educational centres (all programmes) has increased from 3,400 (2001) to 18,073 in 1397/2018<sup>5</sup>. School Shuras have played a key role in community participation in the education of children at the local level. Average pass rates in 1397/2018 stood at 66% for both sexes<sup>6</sup>.

While education reform and rehabilitation has made remarkable progress over the last 15 years, a considerable gap remains in terms of access and quality improvement between provinces and between urban and rural areas. The availability of female teachers, a key intervention strategy for NESP III, is on average 34% nationwide in 2018. However, the range from 1.8% to 74% is clearly emphasizing the need for greater attention to sub-national, local priorities, and also to adapt strategies to local needs. (CBRP 13).

Significant progress has been achieved in curriculum development, while the provision of textbooks and teaching/learning materials is grossly inadequate. There are huge discrepancies in the availability of books and learning materials between government and private schools. Private schools have much better provision. The imbalance is illustrated by the proportion of schools with a computer room: 7% of govt. schools, 82% of private schools.

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<sup>4</sup> Source (CBRP 2017 (P.13))

<sup>5</sup> MOE EMIS 1397

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

## **PROGRESS AGAINST THE 1397/2018 OBJECTIVES AND OPERATIONAL PLAN**

This section is based on the Results Framework of the 1397/2018 MOE Operational Plan. It consists of a narrative based on the figures in the results Framework. The complete tables can be found in the annex pp. 92 ff.

### **ACCESS**

In General Education progress against the 1397 operational objectives in access was good as regards increasing the number of new entrants (97% relative to target), and in constructing science centres (90%). Less satisfactory, however, were results in establishing new schools and upgrading primary schools to secondary, and secondary to high schools, which were only around 24% or less. Performance was only slightly better where MOE wanted to establish attached classes (36%). No reasons have been given for poor performance.

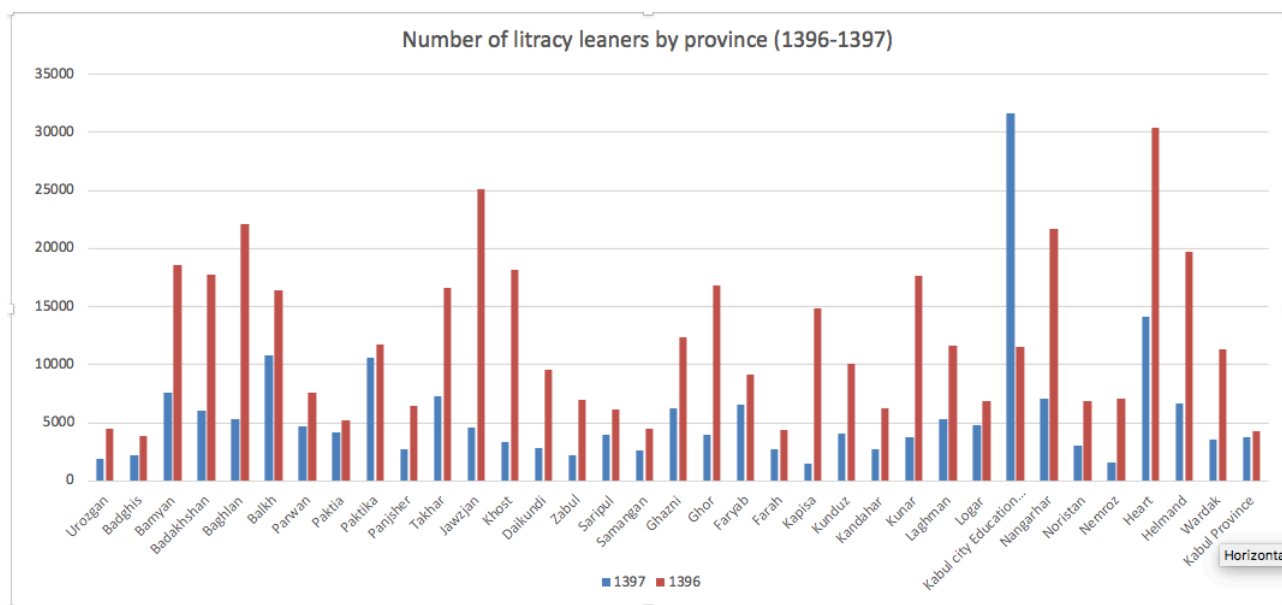
EMIS reports with statistics for disability, IDPs and ethnicity are not available.

The operational access targets for Islamic Education focused on increasing enrolment, and food and accommodation beneficiaries, where good progress was achieved in the number of male students, but less so for female students. Progress in the establishment of new institutions, and on construction of buildings and dormitories was less satisfactory: 22% -50%.

In Teacher Training performance in the number of teachers trained in INSET (M44%, F17%) and the number of private TTC 14% was poor.

The TVET access targets were achieved one third or less. They focused on enrolment, entrants in teacher-student courses, number of vocational courses and beneficiaries from food and accommodation facilities.

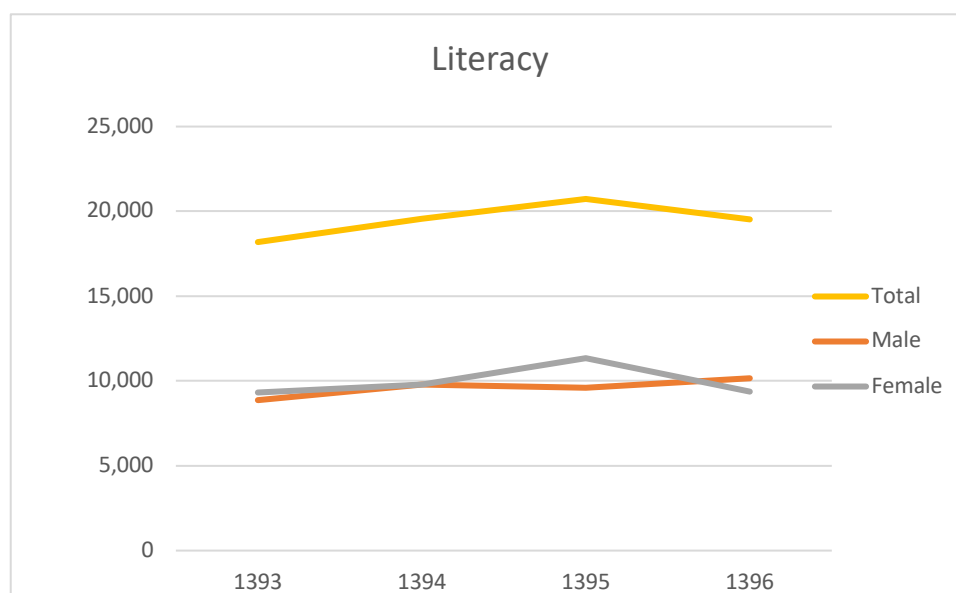
The number of literacy courses has been almost stagnant, between 18,000– 21,000, (DM literacy, 2014-2017) during four years and it is insignificant in relation to needs and despite explicit political attention to the importance of increasing its coverage. The number of female learners went down in 1396.



Source: DM-Literacy

Performance in literacy was 69% (57% F) in enrolment, number of literacy courses 83% and 43% beneficiaries from vocational literacy/education. This performance may not look particularly bad in itself, but the target numbers relative to need appear to be extremely low.

literacy courses (1393-1396)



Source: MOE/DM Literacy

## QUALITY

In General Education, the targets for development and distribution of math kits and labs tables were satisfactorily achieved between 69%-100% extent, while academic training of experts was achieved to 62%, and training of teachers only achieved 17% of target.

In Islamic Education, quality targets were satisfactory in the number of trained teachers (56%) and supervisors (294%). Other quality targets in IE were less satisfactory: provision of textbooks (10%) and computer labs (12%).

In Teacher Training, the achievement of quality targets in textbooks, teacher assessment and training was very poor: 1% -10%.

In Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) the quality targets were achieved to a considerable degree ranging from 67% - 171%. They focused on equipment of schools, on number and standards for curriculum development, assessment, teachers trained as well textbooks and teacher guides distributed.

Literacy quality targets were concerned with academic training of literacy teachers (111% achieved), number of textbooks for literacy and vocational courses (only 14 %) as well as progress in curriculum and textbook development (60%):

#### **GOVERNANCE**

In General Education, the operational targets in the governance field in school supervision and recruitment of contract teachers were almost fully achieved, while establishment of school councils (24%) and school improvement plans (31%) was less satisfactory.

Governance targets in Islamic Education (recruitment of teachers) were achieved: 600 are in the process of being recruited of a target of 600.

The Teacher Education governance targets concerned with recruitment of teachers were achieved 88% but not in monitoring of training centres:

The TVET structure is being reviewed. During the first quarter of monitoring there had been good progress on a functional review of TVET's management and program structure. The NUG leadership decided to make TVET an Independent Technical & Vocational Education and Training Board. IARCSC has been assigned to develop the concept of a new TVET structure. The Ministry of Finance will consider the new budget for the next year. Currently, TVET is using funds from a MoE 1397 approved budget.

TVET is now developing provincial profiles to determine which provinces have the capacity and potential to support particular vocations/professions to respond to market demands. So far, a pilot profile has been made in Baghlan province. TVET is going to develop such provincial profiles for all provinces. Once the provincial profiles are developed, TVET will develop an overall strategic plan.

The TVET governance targets concerned with recruitment of teachers were achieved, but only 172% on monitoring of schools and institutes.

Literacy governance targets concerned with supervision of courses were achieved 62% but no contract teachers were recruited.

MEC recommended MoE to conduct a review of the management and structure of Adult Literacy Programs, including an examination of options to expand monitoring of enrolment and course quality.

MoE reported that the Adult Education Directorate was established to provide the opportunities of continuing education for the literacy course graduates, especially women. A Special Monitoring Manager role is being established in the Literacy Department. A Manual for Monitoring Literacy Courses has also been developed and provided to all monitors in the field.

Participatory monitoring has been started by the Mullah Imams, Shuras, influential members of the community, and local development monitors. The outline of participatory monitoring has now been prepared and regular participatory monitoring is being conducted by village literacy committees, Mullah Imams, Shuras and influential people in the communities in accordance with the Literacy Department's reporting format. The implementation procedures to find priority areas and learners and for CDCs to monitor literacy classes have been drafted. The community participation program in literacy has been piloted and a corresponding manual has also developed for this purpose.

Based on the Literacy Department's current organizational structure (Tashkeel), monitoring has been done for improving the quality of teaching and identifying teaching and learning problems/gaps.

To address literacy teacher capacity building, a program under the name of "Facilitators Bi-monthly Seminars" has been launched and a related implementation guideline developed and distributed to all districts. Pilot trainings were conducted for PLC and DLC staff and a system for assessing facilitator capacity will be Developed with support from Enhancement of Literacy in Afghanistan.

#### Flexible Adult Literacy Programs for women

In order to have flexible Adult Literacy Programs for women, three specific actions have been taken so far. First, an agreement has now been signed with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) to establish special literacy courses for women. Second, MOE Deputy Ministry for Literacy signed another MOU with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD) to establish the literacy courses for women in its "Economic Empowerment of Women" program. Third, an agreement is signed with the MoF to include the women literacy education in citizen charter program.

There has been considerable progress within the operational targets for educational governance. They focused on the development of district operational plans, on MOUs. In addition, it focused on staff training and recruitment, and on MOE organizational restructuring. Little progress, however, in the development of provincial plans (7%)<sup>b</sup> and on the amount of land donated for teachers' townships (9%).

#### STATISTICAL TRENDS (MAINLY 1394-1396)

Based on MOE EMIS, overall progress in total enrolment between 1394 – 1396 has been very slow, and even negative in number of TVET students and number of adult literacy learners. A number of indicators related to female participation (GPI and % of female teachers) were not captured in the NESP monitoring matrix.

**Table 4. NESP III Key Monitoring Indicators: Access: Enrolment, classes and teachers**

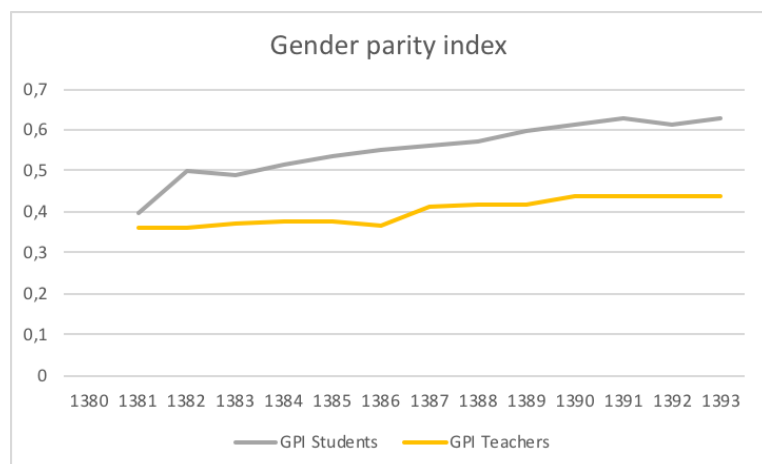
Year	1394/2015		1396/2017		Trend	% NESP Goal
Indicator	Target	EMIS	Target	EMIS		
Total enrolment (000)	9200	8872	9716	9,136	3%	92,18%
Primary GER	111,5	N.A.	114,1	104.6		
GPI for Primary	0,67	0,67	0,69	0,66	-0.015	57,97%
Lower secondary GER	66,9	N.A.	76,6	67.8		
GPI for Lower Secondary	0.57	0.57	0.63	0.57	0	
Upper secondary GER	42.2	N.A.	46.3	40.1		
GPI for Upper Secondary	0.52	0.52	0.55	0.53	0.01	
No. Children in CBE classes (000)	334.	N.A.	550.	276		
Student/class ratio in GE	40.8	40.99	40.6	40.9	-0.002	
Textbook/pupil ratio	6.1	N.A.	8.1	N.A.	0.03	
% Female teachers in GE	33.3	33.4	35.1	34.3		
Total enrolment in TVET	81.500	77.380	82.400	37.886	-0.51	45.98%
% female enrolment in TVET	17.1	16.7	18.9	11.1	-0.32	60.70%
% Schools with adequate building	51	52	51	56	0.07	
No. of adult literacy learners	392.900	19.547	410.000	19.529	-9E-04	4.76%
% female literacy learners	53.9	50	57,20	48,00	-0,04	83.92%



Table 5. Evolution of class-pupil ratio

		Grade 1	Grade 6	Grade 10	Grade 12
<b>Enrolment 1396</b>	<b>M</b>	680,248	537,438	259,274	188,533
	<b>F</b>	450,468	336,762	135,783	97,188
	<b>T</b>	1,130,716	874,200	410,042	285,721
<b>Classes 1396</b>	<b>M</b>	12,663	11,328	6,363	5,134
	<b>F</b>	7,953	6,727	3,377	2,818
	<b>Mix</b>	6,694	4,393	696	604
	<b>T</b>	27,310	22,448	10,436	8,556
	<b>CPR</b>	41	39	39	33
<b>Enrolment 1395</b>	<b>M</b>	62,6072	493,459	240,458	169,098
	<b>F</b>	406,979	317,097	129,042	91,257
	<b>T</b>	1,033,051	810,556	369,500	260,355
<b>Classes 1395</b>	<b>M</b>	1173	10734	6103	5010
	<b>F</b>	7211	6426	3253	2703
	<b>Mix</b>	6429	4257	785	602
	<b>T</b>	14,813	21,417	10,141	8,315
	<b>CPR</b>	70	38	36	31

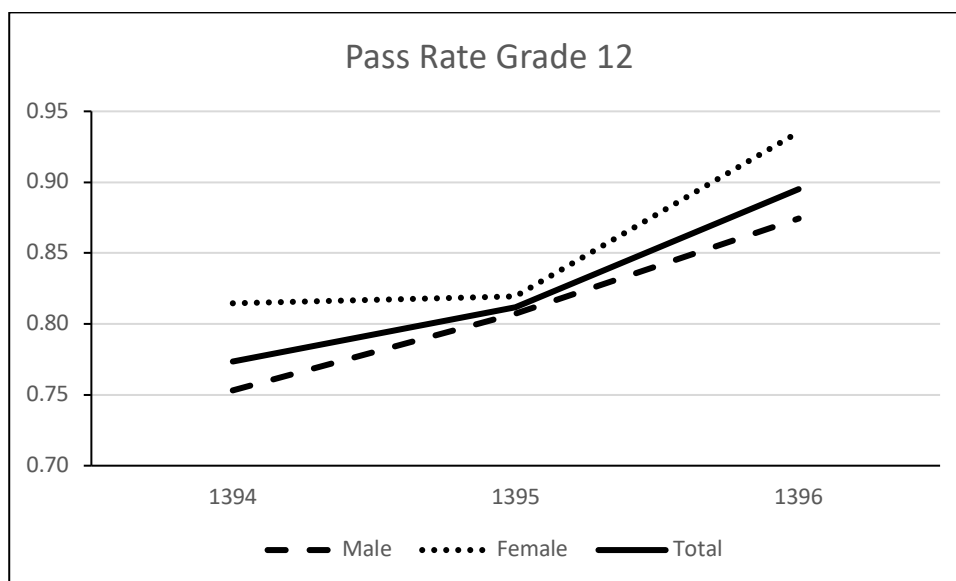
Gender Parity Index (GPI) Students and Teachers 1380/2001-1393/2014



Based on MOE EMIS: "Teachers and Students (Government Schools 1380-1391, for all 1392-1993)"

Promotion from one grade to the next averages 71,5% in grades 1-5 for both sexes, and 72,5% in grades 6-12. Average promotion is 2-3 % higher for boys than girls in grades 1-8, but from grade 9 onwards it shifts. Here the average promotion of girls is 1-3 % higher for girls than boys.

Pass rates grade 12 have significantly improved from 1394-96 by 0,13 percent points, and females tend to score better than males:



In 1396 average pass rates were the same, 66 % for boys and girls. (Source: MOE/EMIS)

The Afghan education system is highly gender segregated. Out of 238,817 classes in 1397/2018, 122,159 classes were male which constituted 51 % of total. Female classes were 71,605 equivalent to 30% of total, while the remainder 45,053 classes or 19% were mixed or co-educational.

The percentage of female graduates from the education system tend to increase with the level of education- The proportion of female graduates in 1397/2018 was 37% and 13% for General Education and Islamic Education at grade 12, while the proportion of female graduates at grade 14 was 55% for Islamic Education and 53% for Teacher Education.

#### CHALLENGES<sup>7</sup>

Education in Afghanistan has been frequently interrupted by war, displacement, migration, natural disasters, or otherwise, bringing with it a set of particular challenges. It is not uncommon for classes in primary education to include children of considerable higher ages, and limited access to formal documentation has led to further problems for education governance.

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<sup>7</sup> Based on Samuel Hall Afg-report-oosc 2018, and CBRP p13 ff

Geographically, Afghanistan presents access challenges, with much of its terrain mountainous. An ethnically and linguistically diverse nation, Afghanistan counts numerous ethnic groups, including Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek, Hazara, Turkmen and Baloch amongst others. These may have different cultural traditions and speak different languages. They also impact children, as worldwide child protection standards are not followed in many cases (previous studies have found numerous children victims of physical punishments, for example).

The current economic situation is threatened by inflation and violence. The latest World Bank reports note a worsening of the situation with regards to poverty, with 39 per cent of the population currently assessed as poor. The existing educational infrastructure is insufficient for the potential number of students in the country, with a significant portion of existing schools without proper buildings.

Conditions across the country vary significantly, with under 11 per cent of the rural population, for example, having access to grid electric power. Forced displacement is a significant issue: since 2002, over one million people have been internally displaced and 8.5 million have returned from abroad, many forced, to Afghanistan. Most returnees settle in either Kabul or Jalalabad, putting additional strain on education service deliverers.

Finally, Afghanistan continues to be in a situation of growing insecurity, with 45 districts at least partially under the control of non-state armed groups and 118 currently being contested – about 40 per cent of the country. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) predicts a continued growth in insecurity.

## **Statistics**

Population data estimates in Afghanistan, from the general to the education related, differ widely. The CSO estimates an overall population of 31,575,018 in Afghanistan in 2017–2018. The United Nations Population Division (UNPD) estimates 33,736,000 in 2015.

In Afghanistan, estimates even of the number of children in school in 2015 given by government officials have ranged from 6 million to 11 million. The last full census was carried out in 1979. Official education records keep children on the books for three years.

Estimates on the number of OOSC differ as well. The MoE estimates that in 2016, there were over 4.5 million children out of school, of whom about 3.5 million have never attended school (as given in the 2016 Education Sector Analysis). In comparison, the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey

Population estimates differ due to a host of reasons, ranging from different census estimates based on 1979 data (the last full census carried out in Afghanistan), successive changes in legislation, regional differences of the compulsory school age, uneven resource allocation of ministerial and international funding to an overall lack of reliable data.

However, both the CSO and UNPD population estimates note a significant portion of the population as being under the age of 15, with 48 per cent of the population under the age of 15 in

2017 according to the CSO. From an education perspective, this means that even in an ideal world, where 100 percent of Afghan children went to school, the current infrastructure and budget available for education would likely not be sufficient in 5–10 years. In the current state, where numerous children are already out of school, it underlines the need for urgent support to the system to avoid a worsening situation.

Teacher needs forecasting is challenging because it is difficult to predict future student numbers without reliable indicators. EMIS data shows an increase of 30.3% in enrolled students between 2010 and 2017 (approximately 3.8% year-on-year). Teacher needs until 2025 are forecasted using the two different calculation methods, and assuming student enrolment trends will be similar to the past seven years. However, an estimated 3.5 million children were out of school in 2017 (girls comprise 75% of this group) and if the MoE were to effectively address this issue, student enrolment, as well as teachers needed, would rise more rapidly. (WB/TPS)

Data on the distribution of teachers across schools is less reliable. EMIS is based on self-reported data by schools. There are tremendous variations in EMIS reported PTRs across schools. Almost 23% of *primary* schools (n=1,295) reported having more than 100 students per teacher, and almost 13% (n=719) reported having more than 140. Half of the schools reported having between 20 and 70 students per teacher, and 11% (n=620) reported having *less* than 20 students per teacher. These variations might appear extreme, but are not unexpected, given the actual PTR in primary education (53 *on average*) and the policy to allow the creation of small classes. While more reliable (and verified) data is required to be conclusive, it is clear that there are substantial discrepancies between schools. (WB/TPS)

## Key challenges

The key challenges effecting MoE service delivery, according to CBRP (p. 23) are as follows:

- Security issues: in most areas, the schools are closed due to security issues and teachers, girls' students, MoE supervision teams are not allowed to the areas. School buildings are destroyed. Students are threatened, killed and prevented from going to school.
- Insufficient budget: MoE is the only government entity which has about 67% of all civil servants in the country. The allocation budget for this ministry is not enough. The current budget doesn't respond to the current needs of MoE. The salary of teachers is very low, there isn't enough equipment and tools, there isn't enough budget to build school buildings and equip them based on the needs.
- Social and cultural issue: in most areas, the family doesn't allow their girls to participate in school due to social and cultural issues.
- Lack of female teachers in local areas: due to security and social and cultural issues MoE is not able to find and recruit enough female teachers for local areas. Consequently, the majority of girls are prevented from going to school.
- Insufficient formal (within Tashkeel) teachers: while the current Tashkeel of MoE is the biggest government entity with about 67% civil servants, it is not enough. In local areas, in

most schools, more than 40% of teachers are contracted and they are not in Tashkeel. It is essential to increase the number of formal teachers in all areas to respond to their needs

- Insufficient technical and professional qualification of teachers in remote local areas: based on the report of EJSR 2015, more than 43% of teachers in the country are 12<sup>th</sup> grade graduate, 9% are lower than 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 38% are 14<sup>th</sup> grade graduate and 10% are bachelors and above.
- Lack of standard buildings for schools: based on information received from Publication Directorate, more than 50% of schools in the country do not have basic and standard buildings.

## **5 THE REFORM AGENDA**

Since 1380/2001 Afghanistan has witnessed a number of educational reforms, most of which, however, have rarely yielded the expected results. The main reasons that other past reforms were not overly successful, according to the CBRP, are: lack of good internal coordination; large and complex programs; long and complex business processes, and insufficient leadership Commitment.

The year 2018 marks the initiation of a comprehensive and ambitious education reform agenda for the Ministry of Education<sup>8</sup>. MOE will try to shift from a program-based approach of service delivery to a more holistic and priority-based approach. The shift in approach will require a complete change in the administration and structure of the education system. Key elements of the reform are:

- A Structural Reform of MOE and rationalizing what has been called an “overcrowded” structure
- Decentralisation and higher involvement of the local community and civil society in the supervision and implementation of educational service delivery
- A Focus on educational Core functions and the Outsourcing of other auxiliary functions
- An Automation of processes and procedures
- Corruption prevention and Increased transparency and accountability
- A more equitable and inclusive education provision
- At school level the reform will manifest itself in increased civil society participation in supervision and management of education service delivery as well as in the recruitment of teachers.
- A large number of functions, which were centrally implemented before, will increasingly be decentralised to district and school level.

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<sup>8</sup> Education Reform, Executive Summary: A collection of policies, processes and working procedures, MOE 2018

A number of auxiliary service functions like cleaning, safety, transport and maintenance will be outsourced to private service providers. Similarly, the construction of schools and learning centres will increasingly be delegated to other institutions like MRRD and MoUDH and based on standard designs.

Education provision will be diversified by allowing private and community-based actors to deliver educational services. EMIS will be updated and automatized and statistical data will to a larger degree than now be utilized for decision making and policy development.

Accountability and transparency will be strengthened by improving the auditing of procurement, finance and information systems and by encouraging CSOs and communities to supervise the delivery of education services as well as encouraging their active taking part in corruption prevention.

Student learning will be monitored through standardized assessment systems at the completion of the primary cycle and facilitated through formative and portfolio-based assessment, particularly at the earlier grades.

A more equitable education provision will be pursued through needs and norm-based budget allocations and the identification and mapping of underserved areas. A girls' education policy will be developed to enhance gender equity. In order to make the system more inclusive of other vulnerable groups the allocation of compensatory and special packages will be initiated, and a school health policy will be developed.

Despite explicit political attention to education reform, little specific action is visible. At the time of writing this 2018 EJSR report no operational plans or specific budget allocations for education reform were available in English.

The Capacity Building for Results Programme (CBRP) supported by WB has five major reform objectives

- Strengthening and capacitating Human Resources General Directorate
- Establishing Enterprise Resource Planning
- Privatizing Printing and Distribution of Textbooks
- Schools Based Management System
- Strengthening the directorate of private education

*Reform Area 1:* strengthening and capacitating Human Resources General Directorate - The HR-DG must be strengthened given the huge number of employees in the MoE; albeit primarily teachers. A comprehensive HR strategy needs to be in place in order to better coordinate and support the human capital in the ministry.

*Reform Area 2:* establishing Enterprise Resource Planning - MoE urgently needs an ERP system to be established, this will allow the day-to-day NESP management and governance functions to be properly discharged. The proposed ERP will provide for the integrated management of core business processes related to the NESP/Citizens Charter, supported by software and technology.

*Reform Area 3: Privatizing Printing and Distribution of Textbooks* - There is no need for government to print textbooks instead they can be printed by the private sector, based on standards set by MoE. Such an approach would provide a fiscal saving to government and encourage the private sector. It would also encourage a wider distribution of subject matter text books for many disciplines, across the three tiers education system. CBR would provide TA to assist the Ministry of drafting the RFP and contract documents for the procurement exercise, and support for the procurement and quality control process, for the first round of procurement only.

*Reform Area 4: Schools Based Management System* - School Based Management (SBM) in provincial clusters will support the education sector at the school level to be more independent when it comes to decisions on basic service delivery and process. SBM will be supported as a pilot, to include establishment of a National SBM program linked to the NESP and SBM Guidelines, to cover issues such as (i) school governance structure (ii) school block grants / financing modalities (iii) school improvement plans (iv) school performance monitoring (v) MIS (vi) capacity development planning and (vii) Parent Teacher Associations (Shuras).

*Reform Area 5: Strengthening the directorate of private education* - Capacity at the directorate of private education should therefore be strengthened to (i) encourage private investments to education, (ii) develop Standard Operating Procedures, (iii) simplify and shorten the licensing of private schools, (iv) strengthen the monitoring and reporting of private schools.

## **6 FOCUS AREAS**

### **ACCESS TO EQUITABLE EDUCATION: ADDRESSING OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND IMPROVING GIRLS' EDUCATION**

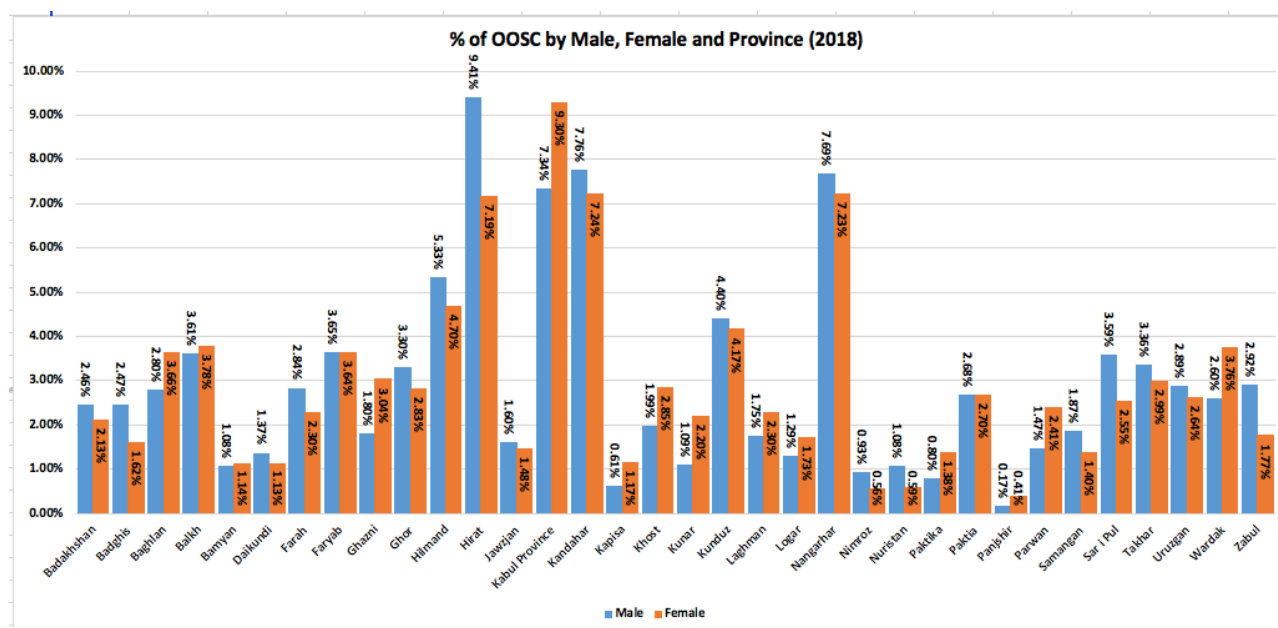
#### *OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND GIRLS EDUCATION*

In Afghanistan, there is a significant number of children who do not attend schools. According to UNICEF, there are approximately 3.7 million while EiE estimated 3.5 million out-of-school-children (OOSC) in Afghanistan. About 60% (75% according to EiE) of OOSC are girls, and in some provinces as many as 85% of girls are out of school. Additionally, it is estimated that 95% of children with disabilities do not attend schools.<sup>9</sup>

The distribution of OOSC across provinces and between sexes is highly inequitable as demonstrated by the table below. No accurate data and information are available, however, on OOSC number, age, and gender by province, districts and village .

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<sup>9</sup> MOE/DRS



UNICEF, 2018

A recent report<sup>10</sup> has analysed the situation of OOSC in Afghanistan. The report identifies Five dimensions of exclusion in Afghanistan.

Dimension 1 – Children of pre-primary school age who are out of school – no nationwide data exist on pre-primary education at this point in time allowing for clear analyses. However, secondary literature notes this as a key gap in Afghanistan, with estimates that only 1 per cent of children attend early childhood education programmes, which is of particular concern in rural areas.

Dimension 2 – Children of primary school age who are out of school – an estimated 2.3 million (CSO)/2.6 million (UNPD) children are out of school at the primary level. Girls in the country's southern provinces are most likely to be out of school; other children at risk, more broadly, include those living in rural areas, Kuchi (nomadic) children, children whose households are in the lower three wealth quintiles, children whose head of household has no formal education, and children in insecure areas. Working children whose head of household has no education are also less likely to attend school.

Using the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (ALCS) to conduct analyses in conjunction with CSO population estimates, the data show an overall OOSC rate of 19.7 per cent of urban children at the primary level, while 47.4 per cent of rural children of primary school age are out of school. In terms of concentrations of OOSC, the greatest numbers of out-of-school girls are located in Kabul, Kandahar, Herat and Nangarhar.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Hall: Global Initiative on Out-Of-School Children – Afghanistan Country Study, 2018



Dimension 3 – Children of lower secondary school age who are out of school – an estimated 854,000 (CSO)/984,000 (UNPD) children of lower secondary age are out of school. As with Dimension 2, girls in the southern provinces are most likely to be out of school. Again, other children at risk, more broadly, include those living in rural areas (19.3 per cent of lower secondary aged children in urban areas versus 47.0 per cent of those in rural areas are out of school), Kuchi children, children whose households are in the lower three wealth quintiles, children whose head of household has no formal education, children with no school exposure, and children in insecure areas.

Dimensions 4 and 5 – Children in primary and lower secondary school at risk of dropping out – an estimated 257,000 (CSO)/296,000 (UNPD) current primary school students are expected to drop out before the end of primary school, and approximately 42,000 (CSO)/48,000 (UNPD) current lower secondary school students are expected to drop out before the end of lower secondary school. While for children in primary school, the risk of dropping out is equal for boys and girls, at the lower secondary level, girls are more likely to drop out than boys (8.3 per cent vs. 4.1 per cent). Displaced children are also expected to be more likely to drop out.

#### **REASONS FOR DROP-OUT AND NON-ATTENDANCE**

In Afghanistan, gender is one of the main disparities impacting the lives of children. This is particularly marked in the education sector. The majority (75 per cent) of the 3.7 million out-of-school children in Afghanistan are girls. Gender disparities are often reinforced by geographical inequities and limited access to services in rural areas, with parents reluctant to allow girls to walk long distances to reach school, in addition to cultural and religious barriers. (UNICEF Annual Report 2017).

There are many reasons for non-attendance<sup>11</sup>; they include long distances to schools for many children, insecurity in some areas and harassment – specially for girls, early marriage and cultural norms and traditions, which deprioritize education for girls, poverty, damaged and inadequate numbers of classrooms, shortage of teachers (especially female teachers) and inadequate and irrelevant learning and teaching resources, lack of inclusive facilities at schools. Continuity of education is another significant problem, with many girls and boys unable to progress from one stage of study to the next largely due to capacity limitations in the formal hub schools. All of these challenges have been exacerbated by the protracted emergency situation, combined with the prevalence of natural disasters and climate change impacts and resulting dislocation of populations.

#### **OPTIONS FOR SETTING UP A TRACKING SYSTEM TO FOLLOW UP OOSC.**

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<sup>11</sup> EJSR 2018 Key Findings from the Field, MOE; ECW, p.2

NESP III in its strategic policy actions recommends that school principals conduct local school mapping of OOSC.

Acknowledging that OOSC cannot be treated effectively only from an educational perspective, it has been argued that it is time to promoting cross-sectoral efforts to overcome actual barriers to schooling<sup>12</sup>. There is need for a vision making OOSC a multi-sectoral national cause, for developing a cross-sectoral mind-set among all relevant stakeholders (education, health, child protection, welfare, etc.).

A tracking system for OOSC. It is feasible to develop such system based on the following criteria: area, children age, family economic situation. To establish such system, involvement of community Shuras, community leaders, parents, MoE, natural disaster office, and Ministry of Refugees and Returnees is a must. The system needs to be established at provincial level. In the establishment of the system, using more local capacity will increase the success of the system. The local capacity includes school principals, mosques imams, community leaders, government organizations like MoPH, NGOs.

As Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has an annual door-to-door vaccination program, MoE can do a survey on OOSC in cooperation with MoPH. An alternative is the Directorate of Population and Registration because they also do an annual survey.

Addressing data and research gaps. Implementing a rigorous household census, in collaboration with the CSO, UNICEF, UNESCO and other relevant technical actors. Addressing specific recommendations for the Education Management Information System. Setting an ambitious and pragmatic research agenda on both short and long term.

There is also need for systematic and intensified local-level participatory coordination in OOSC tracking.

Community Shuras can help a lot if we provide some incentive to the members as they are in close contact with community and this way they can encourage people to send their kids to schools. Support of education by commanders and elders of the community to encourage parents to send their children to schools. Public awareness and encouraging parents by providing stationery as most of the families are poor.

And there is need for exploring ways to capitalize on public-private partnerships to expand provision, particularly of lower secondary education for disadvantaged students. MoE can ask businessmen to financially support education service delivery to OOSC and the neglected areas.

#### **IDENTIFYING ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF EDUCATION IN ORDER TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO OOSC**

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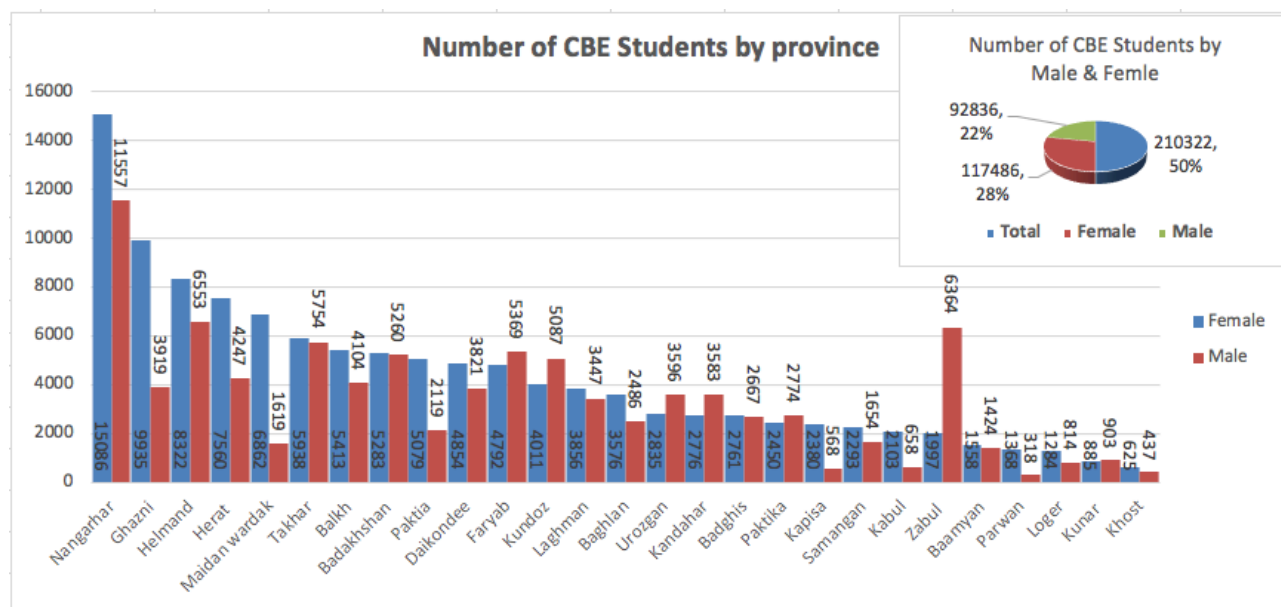
<sup>12</sup> Hall, op. cit.

Since mid-2017, more than 25 new policy documents have been developed that cover education development, accelerated learning, and social cooperation strategies.

Community-based education (CBE)<sup>13</sup> is an approach meant to expand access to education in remote and rural communities that are not served by formal education. Community-based education schools and classes are established in community buildings or houses in remote, rural and sparsely populated villages, where no gender-appropriate school exists, public schools are more than 3 kilometres away and a significant number of children are over-aged. To ensure consistency with the education delivered through public schools, community-based education schools and classes follow the required annual hours per grade level as described in the guidelines of the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the community-based education policy.

Community-based education is offered through community-based schools as well as accelerated learning centres (ALCs). The establishment of these centres continues to be an effective strategy for addressing the education barriers faced by girls by bringing school to their villages.

As of 2017, 275,847 children are enrolled in 10,339 community-based schools and 117,606 children are taking part in 4,389 ALCs classes. Seventy-three per cent of children in ALCs are girls, while this proportion is 59 per cent in community-based schools. The distribution across provinces and sex is demonstrated by the table below.



Source: MOE/GE 1397

<sup>13</sup> Based on UNICEF 2017 report

It is a problem, however, that CBE schools are not sustainable. They operate as projects for a three-year period and then they are discontinued. It is recommended that CBE and accelerated programs should be continued and made permanent. Further, duplication of activities by MoE and NGOs should be stopped so that education service delivery to be done equally at all areas.

In addition to CBE MoE should also set up satellite schools in remote areas to tackle the issue of out-of-school children. Action plans for alternative ways to provide education to OOSC needs to be participatory. Using the local capacity like mosques and local media for public awareness is important.

The major supporters of CBE are UNICEF, GPE, SCA and AKF as can be seen from the table above. Some NGOs operate in several provinces in collaboration with different partners.

### **Summary Recommendations:**

Number of CBEs to be increased wherever it is needed in villages and remote area

For CBE sustainability purposes, MoE needs to plan to link CBE classes to hub-schools and transfer CBE students to hub-schools after grade 3 by increasing hub-schools responsibility and further improve CBEs supervision by making it more participatory

An alternative for OOSC is to use mosques as CBE classes that can be effective in OOSC enrolment

Encouraging the private sectors to establish schools to address the OOSC lack of access to education in the insecure areas by using MoE budget

MoE is recommended to establish primary schools in the areas most needed not based on request from MPs or powerbrokers

To improve public awareness programs, a policy to be developed and certain amount of budget need to be allocated

### **STRATEGIES TO INCREASE ACCESS FOR GIRLS**

A desk review study by MOE (MOE/DRS) highlights the commitment of the government as reflected in documents and agreements signed by Afghanistan at international levels<sup>14</sup>.

Gender inequality is reflected in the low number of female teachers in Afghanistan. Improving equitable distribution of resources within the education system by focusing on specific groups of marginalized children. Expanding public provision of school and preschool infrastructure, targeting the most deprived areas. Providing schools and areas that perform below average in terms of retention and learning achievements with tailored support and resources. Developing pilot Conditional Cash Transfer programmes. Offering food in schools. Designing 'safe walk' systems,

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<sup>14</sup> Declaration of the Essential Rights of Afghan Women signed in 2002. The 2004 Berlin conference agreed on provision of education for both girls and boys up to higher levels. Also, in the Bonn agreement, women's role in peace and social infrastructures was emphasized.

with community support. Scaling up early childhood development programmes and government-led pre-primary education. Improve pedagogy (teaching and learning). Reducing dropout rates in the primary cycle and increasing transition rates between the primary and lower secondary education cycle. Using technology to facilitate long-distance learning/at home learning for children in rural and insecure areas.

Using learning assessments: Girls in Afghanistan face particular challenges, for example, fewer girls than boys complete secondary education (MoE, 2016). Therefore, it is particularly important that teachers use the information from learning assessments to identify the next steps for learning for girls that will support their continuing education. Learning assessments can provide valuable information about the needs of individual students and also about groups of students. For example, classroom-based assessment can be used to identify whether there are different learning outcomes for boys and girls within different domains. This information can then be used to identify whether any additional support, or different teaching approaches are needed for particular groups of students.

Female teachers: The Ministry of Education intends to recruit about 30000 new female teachers in the next five years to further facilitate girls' education. In spite of all the efforts made, identification and enrolment of the out-of-school girls are quite challenging and need more effective strategies to address the challenges. It is worth mentioning that so far, no thorough and comprehensive survey on out-of-school children has been done.

Constructing appropriate school buildings, using people's religious beliefs to encourage them to let the girls continue their education up to grade 12.

To better understand the reasons for non-attendance, existing barriers and bottlenecks to access to education have been examined alongside three key dimensions<sup>15</sup>, namely: 1) Demand-side barriers, 2) Supply-side barriers and 3) Political, governance, capacity and financial barriers.

1) Demand-side barriers include barriers to education stemming from *insufficient demand* from the population for education for those of school age.

Demand-side barriers are in particular related to the contextual challenges to girls' education in Afghanistan, ranging from cultural beliefs to practices that negatively impact girls' demand for and access to education, such as religious beliefs in certain areas that girls should only attend religious institutions— or not attend school at all – and child marriage, which remains the second most reported reason for girls dropping out of school. Insecurity of the trip to school and in schools themselves is real – but gendered perceptions of insecurity, suggested by the significantly

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<sup>15</sup> Hall op. cit.

different rates between insecurity being given as a reason for non-attendance of school for boys and girls, and lack of urban transportation for girls<sup>16</sup> further limit girls' access to schooling. Parental level of education, general poverty and ancillary costs of schooling have been identified as key barriers. While child labour does not preclude attendance at school, children engaging in child labour are more likely to be out of school, and when they do attend school, less prepared to focus and learn.

Addressing demand-side barriers means working with parents and communities through public awareness campaigns, shuras, influencing elders and community leaders to challenge and change cultural beliefs and traditions, to increase marital age, to remove harassment and make safe-walks to schools.

2) Supply-side barriers include challenges to attending school caused by *the lack of educational opportunities offered*. Key supply barriers identified and examined range from lack of provision for nomadic ways of life, lack of effective displacement-related solutions and lack of early childhood education to pedagogy and quality/quantity of teachers, content of learning curriculum, quality/quantity of infrastructure and stigma against overage children.

3) Political, governance, capacity and financial barriers. The lack of verified data on education and public sector financial constraints and mismanagement as well as challenges related to security and conflict.

Addressing Supply-side barriers to education are closely tied to political, governance, capacity and financial barriers and bottlenecks, as the latter to a large degree limit access to education.

Nomadic and displaced populations, for example, may lack the necessary papers to access education. Teachers are, in some cases, insufficiently trained, and there is a shortage of teachers in insecure areas, especially of female teachers. Lack of appropriate hard infrastructure, such as lack of boundary walls for schools, further limit the willingness of families to allow children, especially girls, to go to schools. The challenges are huge. However, appropriate approaches to increasing attendance include minimizing distance from home to school (e.g. more CBEs), more female teachers, and active Shuras.

### **Summary Recommendations for girls' education:**

#### On the supply side:

MoE needs to allocate certain budget for recruiting female teachers

To encourage female teachers to teach in the remote areas, MoE needs to give them bonuses, provide transportation, and housing.

Certain amount of budget to be allocated for constructing boundary walls for female schools without boundary walls

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<sup>16</sup> EJSR 2018 Key Findings from the Field, MOE

Capacity building for female teachers in the remote and insecure areas to be considered

To facilitate female's continuing their education at high schools, MoE should establish more high school in the areas most needed

Girls in provinces have asked for establishing CBE classes and government supported out-reach classes in the remote areas

Another effective strategy to encourage girls to go to school is to provide stationery and uniforms for them

On the demand side:

Asking community, schools Shura, imams, and community leaders to encourage parents to send their daughters to school is important as their advice and recommendations are very effective

School principals job description needs to be revised and holding monthly meetings with parents to be included part of their responsibilities

Counselling programs for parents and community in general through media and mosques can encourage them to send their daughters to school

*INCLUSIVE EDUCATION/CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS*

It is currently estimated that up to 4% of the Afghan population live with some form of disability. The Current EMIS, however, does not yet capture the number and distribution of children with disabilities.

According to the strategic plan (NESP-III), there are 800,000 children with special needs in Afghanistan of which, 95% are deprived from education programs. Children with special needs and inclusive education is one of the most important issues in the strategic plan. Facilitating education delivery to these groups has not been paid due attention to so far. The significant number of affected people and the problems they face in daily life activities represents a significant challenge for the entire Afghan society. Discriminatory practices and prejudiced attitudes render disability more handicapping, making the persons with disabilities more vulnerable and more exposed to poverty<sup>17</sup>.

**APPROPRIATE APPROACHES TO INCREASE STUDENTS' DAILY ATTENDANCE RATE IN SCHOOLS.**

Findings: Discipline policy of educational centres states that absenteeism and avoiding classes are considered as the 2nd category of violation<sup>18</sup> but this is not taken seriously by school principals.

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<sup>17</sup> MOE/DRS

<sup>18</sup> Punishment for this kind of violations: schools can

- ask for commitment letter from the student
- the violation is recorded and filed
- if the violation repeated in one academic year:
  - the student is transferred to a nearby school
  - a commitment letter is required from student at his/her parent presence

Key reasons for student absenteeism are: Absenteeism is not taken seriously by school principals instead they are only marked as absent and that is all. Most of school principals do not inform parents of their kids' absenteeism. Students labour and cooperating with their parents in the house chores or outside, and violence in school that discourages students to attend schools.

Recommendations: MoE should make sure that the discipline policy of educational centres is available at schools, it should be explained to school staff, students should be informed of the content of the policy, and principals should be asked to take measures based on the policy. A communication mechanism between school and parents to be developed and in case of students being absent, principals should immediately contact their parents. If a student is absent, the principal needs to take actions according to the policy's 2nd violation category. Schools should be flexible in student enrolment in appropriate shift; if some of the students cannot attend school at certain shift, they should be given choices to opt for another shift. According to article 37 of children's rights, nobody can punish children using violence. Article 39 in education law also clearly prohibits violence, "Every kind of physical and psychological punishment of students is prohibited even for their correction and chastisement. Violators shall be prosecuted in accordance with the legal provisions." Therefore, no violence should be tolerated in schools.

#### *Identification of children with disability in terms of numbers, and categories<sup>19</sup>*

Over the years, the methodology to measure the prevalence of disability has changed considerably. The current notion is that to define and understand disability and to evaluate a person for disabilities, physical and mental conditions should be seen against the backdrop of overall physical and social functioning. There is no strict line between persons with a disability and those without a disability (WHO 2011). Under auspices of the United Nations Statistical Commission, the Washington group has come up with a set of six questions to determine a person's disability status. The activities chosen were: 1) seeing, 2) hearing, 3) walking or climbing stairs, 4) remembering or concentrating, 5) self-care and 6) communicating.

The answer categories for each of the questions are the same and depend on the degree of difficulty the respondent has to perform each activity. The four possible responses are: 'No – no difficulty'; 'Yes – some difficulty'; 'Yes – a lot of difficulty' and 'Cannot do at all.' The Washington Group recommended that *'the sub-population disabled includes everyone with at least one domain that is coded as a lot of difficulty or cannot do at all'*, or in other words, that *'moderate or severe functional limitation'* would define persons with disabilities (Washington Group 2010).

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- if student not transferred to a nearby school, at the teachers meeting, 1-10 grades related to discipline is cut

<sup>19</sup> This section is largely based on ALCS 2016-17



In the analysis, a person is considered to have a disability, if he/she has one or more activities to which 'a 'lot of difficulty' or 'cannot do at all' is responded. Using this internationally accepted criterion, an estimated 924 thousand persons are considered to have a disability in Afghanistan. This implies a disability prevalence rate of 3.2 percent, with a small difference between the disability rate for men and women: 3.2 and 3.1 percent, respectively. Disability rates are higher in urban areas (4.3 percent) than in rural areas (2.8 percent) and among the Kuchi population (3.1 percent). It was found that in some provinces in the country, the reporting of disability was so extremely low, that it could only be caused by serious underreporting. According to the 2011 World Report on Disability, the global prevalence of disability stands at 2.9 percent (WHO 2011). Given Afghanistan's level of economic and social development one can expect that levels below one, or even two percent would be a serious underestimation of the real prevalence of disability. The ALCS data on disability show that 6 provinces have a prevalence below one percent and 15 provinces below two percent. As is the case in other Asian countries, social and cultural factors may prevent respondents to report on the disability conditions of other members of the household and in some cases even interviewers from asking the proper questions. The fact that levels of disability in a number of provinces are so low, indicates that the current estimate for the whole country of 3.2 percent may be an underestimation of the real level. This means that the prevalence presented here should be considered as conservative.

The prevalence of disability in the population is highly age-dependent. The survey shows very low disability rates in the youngest age group. For each subsequent age group there is a small increase in the disability rate, both for men and women. In age group 45-49 the disability rate stands at 6.1 percent for both sexes. After age 50 a rapid increase is observed. Between ages 65 and 69 one in five persons in Afghanistan has a disability. In the adjacent age group (70-74 years) this is already more than one in four. At the oldest joined age-group (85+) more than half of persons are living with a disability (56.0 percent).

The gender parity index shows a pattern of age-specific gender differences in the prevalence of disability. At the younger ages, up to age 35, disabilities are higher among men than among women. Between the ages of 40 and 70, the prevalence of disability is clearly higher for women than for men. Among persons with a disability, 33.1 percent indicated they had multiple disabilities. This percentage was slightly higher for males (33.4 percent) than for females (32.2 percent).

The survey information suggests that Afghanistan counts about 23 thousand blind persons, 32 thousand deaf persons, 56 thousand persons who are unable to walk or climb stairs, 52 thousand people who lack the ability of self-care, 27 thousand persons who cannot remember or concentrate and 28 thousand people who cannot communicate. Based on the responses given in the ALCS 2016-17, it is estimated that 113 thousand people in Afghanistan have a severe disability. Among people with a severe disability, the prevalence of multiple disabilities (moderate or severe) is very high: 70.6 percent of persons with a severe disability have multiple disabilities.

As in many countries in the world, persons with a disability form a vulnerable group within Afghanistan. For instance, the percentage of children and young persons aged 5-18 who attend school is considerably lower among persons with a disability (74.7 percent) than among persons with no disability (87.4 percent). Another example is the lower literacy among persons with a disability. Generally, persons with a disability have considerably lower levels of literacy than persons without a disability. For all persons older than fifteen years, literacy among disabled persons is 19.7 percent while the overall literacy rate for persons without a disability is 35.6 percent.

Findings from the field: Article 3 of education law emphasize that schools should be equipped with facilities specific for children with special needs (CWSN). Also, NESP III emphasize on equitable access to education by enrolment of more children with special needs. MoE in cooperation with other organizations has developed Inclusive & Child Friendly Education Policy in 1393 but it needs to be revised to address the following challenges:

- Though 13 categories of CWSNs are identified, these categories are ambiguous, e.g. no clear definition of disability is presented
- CWSNs are not prioritized to plan for education service delivery to them
- There is no action plan to implement the policy

School construction specifications are not tailored for CWSNs; Though in the policy it is emphasized that these children should be included in classes with other normal students, due to lack of enough teaching time and lack of training for teachers has made difficult to take care of them inclusively.

Recommendations: NESP III needs to be revised to specify how to implement education for CWSN and what category to be prioritized; Inclusive & Child Friendly Education Policy to be revised to fully respond to the CWSN needs; MoE has signed agreements with many NGOs but action plans needed to implement the content the agreements and it needs to have accurate oversight of the activities by these NGOs; The categories of CWSN to be identified: the extent students have problems with their daily activities: seeing, hearing, walking (climbing staircase), concentration, remembering, self-care, and communicating with others; A policy to be developed on capacity building for teachers on how to teach and behave towards CWSN

*A Review of the available MOE facilities and capacities to respond to Children With Special Needs (CWSNs).*

The findings indicate that currently, there are only 10 high schools for special needs in two categories of blind and deaf children in 6 provinces of Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar, Khost, and Ghazni under TVET.

NGOs (like SC, Rahyab, Sarf, JICA) have education programs for CWSN in the following areas:

- Special centres and programs for the blinds, deaf and retarded students

- Monthly meetings with community Shura to discuss the problems with CWSN and find solutions
- Preparing the CWSN to enter the general education in classes with normal students

There is no accurate data on CWSN based on their specific categories; Not enough attention is paid to CWSN inclusion in GE; General education students are not given knowledge about CWSN and how to practice empathy with CWSN; Lack of community's cooperation in the implementation of awareness programs to encourage parents to send their CWSN to school.

A list of challenges to children with special needs were identified by the EJSR provincial teams<sup>20</sup>:

- Lack of competent teachers for children with special needs is a serious problem in general education that is ignored both by MoE and NGOs.
- There has been no accurate and comprehensive survey on what categories of children with special needs exist at provincial level, and most of children with special needs are not identified at district levels
- General education directorate, in particular *The Children With Special Needs Unit*, pay no attention to the continuation of these children education.
- Education Directorate doesn't have any plan to identify children with special needs
- No NGOs have so far supported the children with special needs
- There is sometimes misbehaviour by common people outside school
- Parents are concerned about harassment on way to/from school
- Parents' wrong belief that their children with special needs may not learn and will not have a bright future
- Not enough facilities and support the education of children with special needs
- There are only two special schools for the blind and deaf children. Since the Technical and Vocational program is no longer part of MoE structure, dispute over the buildings of these two schools is going on in Herat and as a result, students have to sit in the corridor of the building for their classes.
- Shortage of textbooks with Braille characters
- People's lack of awareness about the talents and capabilities of the blind and deaf children
- Learning no specific profession in the school

Recommendations: Equipping schools and classrooms in line with the CWSN education needs; The private sectors capacity should be used in curriculum and learning materials development based on the local conditions and also training GE teachers on inclusive education; Providing transportation facilities for those kids who cannot walk; As the content of curriculum for blind and deaf students are the same as GE, it is recommended that these schools should be handed over to

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<sup>20</sup> EJSR 2018 Key Findings from the Field: Laghman, Kandahar, Herat, Samangan, MOE

General education directorate; In the short term, MoE in cooperation with other organizations (MoPH, CSO, Social Affairs Ministry, TVET, ...) conduct a survey on number, and type of needs for education facilities; Training programs to be developed and implemented for school principals on how to facilitate CWSN education; Further expansion and improvement of public awareness programs and activities including how to practice empathy with CWSN in GE schools.

#### *Development of a responsive and efficient strategy to provide education for children with disability*

The Inclusive & Child Friendly Education Policy challenges exclusion and embraces diversity. In inclusive schools, children would be able to learn according to their own abilities and to achieve optimal academic, social, emotional and physical development. The children who are most vulnerable to marginalization within the education system have been identified through a survey conducted in 2008:

- Children Affected by Emergency
- Children Affected by Drugs
- Children from Poor Economic Backgrounds
- Children with Disabilities
- Children from Ethnic, Language, Social and Religious Minorities
- Children in Conflict with Law and Incarceration
- Nomadic (Kuchi) Children
- Children Living Far Away from School -in villages where there is no School
- Children Living on the Street / Homeless Children
- Girls
- Working Children
- Children Suffering from Neglect, Abandonment and/or Abuse<sup>6</sup>
- Gifted Children (For more details please refer to Appendix, P40)

Based on the Ministry of Education's policy all children be it prisoners' children, girls, working children, talented children, disabled children, or children sexually abused should be included in the inclusive education programs. To facilitate the inclusion, MoE has included in the policy themes like public awareness programs, appropriate curriculum, teacher training, supporting system, and teaching aids. To implement the policy, MoE needs to develop appropriate strategies and a monitoring and evaluation system.

#### *VULNERABLE CHILDREN: INTERNALLY DISPLACED AND RETURNEES*

##### *Trend, number and variety of returnees and IDPs and their children's education needs*

Due to the insecurity in some provinces and also the asylum situation in the two neighbouring countries of Pakistan and Iran, the number of IDPs and returnees in the past two years has increased dramatically. Therefore, the education of IDPs and returnees' children has become a

major challenge for the MoE<sup>21</sup>. Overall, in 2016, 618,291 undocumented Afghans, deportees and refugees have returned, of which 370,102 were registered refugees, representing a 56 increase on those who returned in 2015. An estimated 60 per cent of the returning population from Pakistan are children.

Additionally, between January and November 2016, more than 490,000 individuals fled their homes due to conflict, a total of 31 out of 34 provinces recorded some level of forced displacement and nearly 400,000 registered refugees and similar number of undocumented Afghans have returned from Pakistan. This dramatic increase in the number of children arriving in the country or moving to different locations within the country, risks creating a generation of children deprived of education if not adequately met by an effective response in the education sector<sup>22</sup>.

Since 2008, IOM, the International Organization for Migration has supported undocumented Afghan returnees from Pakistan and Iran. In recent years, the numbers of undocumented returnees have increased<sup>23</sup>. A total of 762,000 undocumented Afghans have returned to Afghanistan in the period between 1 January 2016 and 25 March 2017<sup>24</sup>. Furthermore, a total number of 708,043 IDPs (induced by conflict) were recorded between the period 1 January 2016 and 12 March 2017<sup>25</sup>. In the report, however, there is no mention of age, language, residence, and education level, and MoE does not have accurate data on returnees and IDPs by school age to use for planning for these groups of children education

In response to the dramatic increase in Afghan nationals returning home from neighbouring countries, as well as record levels of internal displacement, IOM launched the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) in Afghanistan in 2017. The main objective of the DTM in Afghanistan is to support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and humanitarian partners to provide effective, targeted, cost efficient assistance to conflict and displacement affected populations.

The IOM launched a Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) programme in three provinces with the highest rate of return in Eastern Afghanistan: Nangarhar, Kunar, and Laghman. Following this first phase, IOM Afghanistan will expand the DTM's coverage to Baghlan, Balkh, Kabul, Kunduz, Paktya, and Takhar - six provinces with large displaced populations. The total number of Returnees from abroad is 544,364 which in relation to the total base population of the three provinces (2,456,500)

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<sup>21</sup> This section is partly based on MOE/DRS

<sup>22</sup> EiE response plan for Afghanistan, p. 3

<sup>23</sup> IOM: Baseline Mobility Assessment Summary Results Afghanistan March 2017,

<sup>24</sup> Per MoRR and IOM, these numbers are expected to increase, as an estimated 1.1 million undocumented Afghans and 1.3 million refugees remain in Pakistan, as of the end of Jan. 2017

<sup>25</sup> IOM (2017) "Weekly Situation Report - 19-25 March 2017" – Retrieved from: <https://afghanistan.iom.int/sites/default/files/>

indicates that 1 person in 5 is a returnee. Migrants that left Afghanistan for another country, however, only amount to 65,771 (3% of the base population). These displacements occurred between 2012 and March 2017.

Nangarhar, which borders Pakistan, is the province most affected by displacement. The majority of returnees are from Pakistan and most enter through Torkham (in Nangarhar), the busiest border post between the two countries. Concurrently, the presence and activities of Taliban insurgents and ISIS fighters challenging the control of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANFS) regularly triggers displacement.

In 2017, the Afghan border with Iran continued to register a large number of returnees; the flow from the Pakistan side was much lower in 2017 than in 2016. Many of those returning from Iran are under 18 years of age. Though children were also expected to return from Europe, there were fewer than 10 unaccompanied minors returning in 2017. The humanitarian needs of the returnees – including protection, education and basic needs – are immense. These needs exist in their places of destination, during transit and following their return to their areas of origin.

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Faryab province is one of the provinces where insecurity has increased in the past several years and therefore, the number of IDPs has increased. Donors and NGOs with MoE leadership have created a working group for education in emergency and has made good progress but it needs more attention.

The NGO active in the affairs of IDPs and returnees is Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC). NAC has satellite classes in several districts. As the children are scattered in the area and services cannot be delivered exclusively to IDPs and returnees so the local students are also enrolled in the classes. Lack of accurate data on IDPs and returnees will in future make it difficult to provide service delivery and plan implementation. Therefore, it is recommended as a first step to launch a comprehensive survey in the provinces with highest number of IDPs and returnees. Moreover, the variety of IDPs with instable or stable nature have direct effect on MoE's policy and planning. That is because students who temporarily enrol in the classes after a while may return to their community and their names are registered both in their school in their village, and also in the new

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<sup>26</sup> UNICEF Afgh.COAR. 2017

area, as IDP student. NGOs working with MoE can be very helpful in doing comprehensive surveys of the IDP children and holding attached classes.

NAC acts more as a facilitator but the quality of its services is controversial, and insecurity and political issues negatively affect the education service delivery. Also, there is no policy document on IDPs and returnees available in Faryab and therefore, NGOs in the field just act based on coordination with the Education directorate, not based on a nationwide policy or regulation. The positive point is that people awareness of the usefulness of education has increased very well and parents support their children's education and even anti-government groups in the field don't have any problems with schools and schooling and girls are allowed to go to school up to grade 6. Service delivery up to grade 6 is being done by NAC. However, there is no plan for grade 7 to 12 in the area. The IDPs children are also enrolled in general education schools and education directorate only cooperate with this category of students by giving the placement exam.

Recommendations: MoE needs to collaborate with partners to do a projection of returnees and IDPs for the upcoming years so that they can plan for education service delivery; It is more efficient and feasible to use the capacity of the returnees and IDPs for education service delivery (e.g. in Faryab, teachers are from among IDPs); Some NGOs (IRC, AWAC, NRE, and NAC) support returnees through education in emergencies that can be further expanded.

#### *Use of existing capacity of internally Displaced and Returnees*

The initial assessment findings indicate that undocumented returnees, registered refugee returnees and IDP children do not attend school for three main reasons: i) lack of capacity of schools to enrol additional children; ii) lack of required documentation to facilitate enrolment (although schools are instructed to immediately enrol all returnees without documents), and iii) the costs associated with education.

UNHCR's qualitative analysis highlights the primary challenges including certification processes in countries of asylum, documentation for returnees as well as Tazkera for IDP children, particularly after primary school. Other barriers include economic hardship, challenges accessing and passing placement tests, curriculum, gender and language barriers, marginalization, discriminatory attitudes. Seasonal differences that affect the school year in countries of asylum and origin also have an impact on enrolment.

In a nutshell, the assessment indicates that: On one side, returnees and IDPs children are enrolled to school where capacity exist, awareness is provided to them on how and where they can enrol, local communities and authorities, school managers and development partners projects are supportive of the integration. On the other side, however, returnees and IDPs children are not enrolled to schools due to: perceived notion of lack of required documentation; economic constraints - inability to afford education associated costs; distance to schools; capacity of

schools/education centres to absorb additional students; lack of female teachers, language and cultural barriers<sup>27</sup>.

*Recommending responsive and effective approaches to identifying education needs of IDPs and returnees (government, NGOs, private sectors and other partners):* The most important point about IDPs and returnees' children's education is the future of CBE classes. As mentioned earlier, CBE classes are project based that are funded by NGOs, and the end of life of projects is also the end of CBE classes which threatens the future of the students studying in these classes. MoE in cooperation with private sectors need to develop a consolidated and coordinated plan in this regard. During the interviews, the education authorities were mostly concerned about the unsustainability of CBE classes and some of them believed that MoE has the potential to support the CBE classes up to grade 12 after the life projects. They also proposed establishing schools in the districts and villages to enrol the CBE students as part of GE programs.

Regarding training for teachers, themes like psychological supports for IDP students were included but there has been no assessment of the effectiveness of the training in class teaching and it is hard to assess training in some areas because of security issues.

The curriculum is the same as that of MoE and no emergency curriculum was used in the classes. In fact, nobody was aware of the implementation of emergency curriculum in the field, and education authorities recommended the current curriculum to be reformed and teachers to become professional. They also recommended that the current CBE teachers should be integrated into GE tashkeel. NGOs provide all teaching-learning materials for students and they have been happy with the facilitation and support.

The following challenges to responding to the education needs of IDPs have been identified: Although, MoE provides education service delivery by enrolling the returnees and IDPs in GE schools, these schools do not have enough capacity to respond to the large number of returnees and IDPs; NGOs also provide education to the returnees and IDPs by supporting and managing CBE classes in their camps (e.g. NAC in Faryab); Literacy courses are set up by NGOs for returnees and IDPs youths and adults (e.g. ANAFI in Kabul and Balkh); There are no government schools in the refugee camps; Unsustainability of CBE classes is source of concern for students and their parents; Facilities and other supports are not enough for the returnees and IDPs, therefore, NGOs in the area can support them significantly; The major challenge is the large number of IDPs and returnees, but as resources are insufficient to respond to their education needs, the current level of education service delivery is unsatisfactory; Many NGOs are working in the area but as each of them has their own policy and mandate, they can only cover limited number of the children.

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<sup>27</sup> EiE response plan for Afghanistan, p. 4.



Recommendations: MoE needs to develop a policy on returnees and IDPs in cooperation with NGO partners and other relevant organizations; DM literacy can expand literacy courses for returnee and IDP parents in cooperation with other partners; Expansion of CBE classes and also formal out-reach classes by hiring contract teachers from inside Tashkeel can increase the chance of returnees and IDPs to attend schools; The returnees and IDPs' continuation of education should be guaranteed through coordination with schools in the nearby schools. For this purpose, a mechanism should be developed by MoE in cooperation with partners.

*Predict events and issues which cause internal displacement*

There is no prediction (projection) at national level to determine which areas, villages or districts vulnerable to nature and human disasters and may potentially produce IDPs. Currently, MoE has no prediction (projections) based on which to determine what number of schools and educational centres are exposed to natural and human threats and what number of school-age children are out of school.

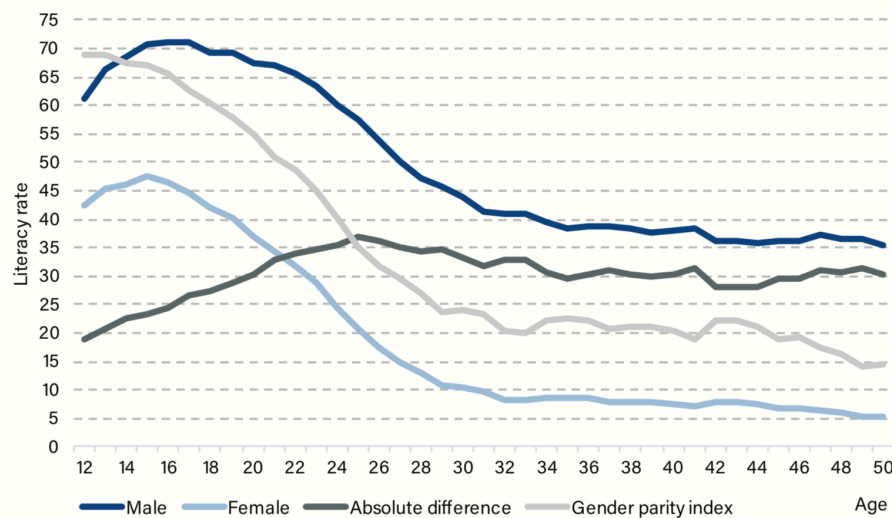
Recommendation: MoE should make a prediction of the natural threats to identify what number of schools are exposed to natural threats. In addition, MoE in cooperation with Office of State Minister for Disaster Management (OSMDM) and other partners should develop a preparation plan to be vigilant about any possible threat to respond to the ID children need.

*ADULT LEARNING*

*Review efforts to prioritize adult learning initiatives based on learners' age, needs and MoE's resources.*

A large proportion of adult afghans, almost 62 %, are illiterate. In 2018, 52% of men above the age of 15 were able to read and write. The corresponding figure for women was 24,2 %. (Source: CIA World Fact Book, January 20, 2018)

Figure 8.19: Literacy rate, by age, and by sex; Gender equity indicators, by age (in percentages)<sup>a</sup>

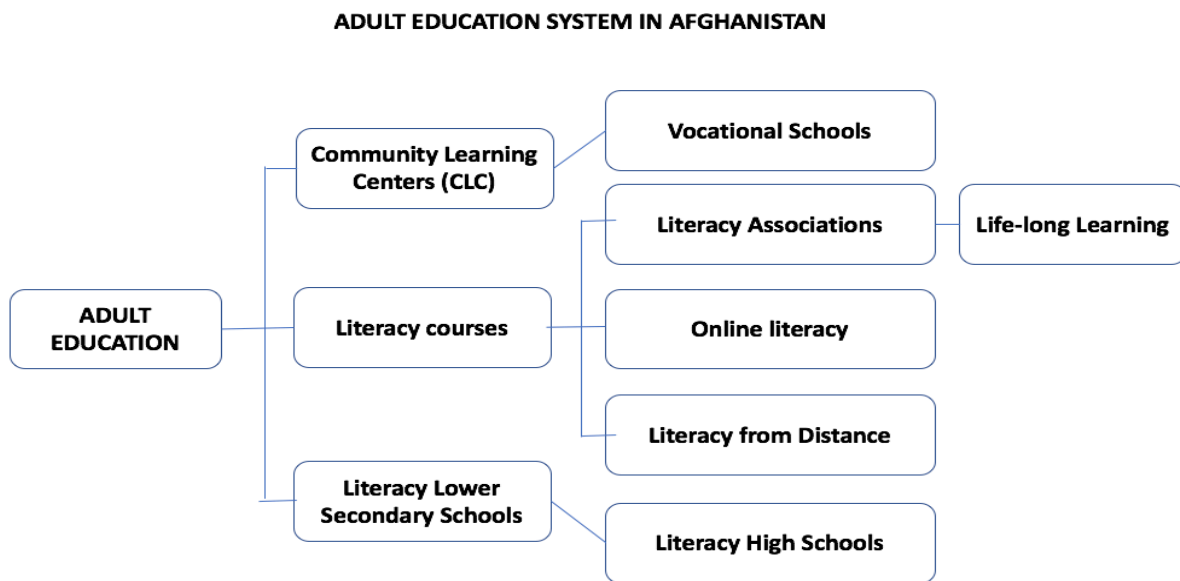


Source: ALCS 2016-17

Literacy education is one of the priority programs of the Ministry of Education of Afghanistan and the National Literacy Strategy 2014-2020 aims to increase national literacy rates from 36% (20% female, 50% male) in 1392/2013 to 60% (50% female and 70% male) by 1399/2020 across all groups of men and women aged 15 and above. The Literacy Department (LD) has run several types of literacy courses designed for illiterate adults (over 15 years old) including nomads. The majority of learners of LD courses attend a 9-month literacy course and learn basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy equivalent to grade 3 of formal school. A number of new initiatives have been launched:

- A Policy for literacy and vocational skills for prisoners is ratified
- Part of the National Campaign for literacy is implemented
- The proposal for gradual conditioning of literacy is prepared
- A proposal for recruiting contract teachers and transferring tashkeel teachers to literacy schools is developed
- A proposal to include literacy program in the national program of Citizen Charters is developed
- A proposal for recruiting education universities and TTCs to teach in the literacy courses is prepared.
- An assessment mechanism is developed to assess the performances of the literacy officers
- New literacy courses and a literacy school policy is developed
- Self-competency assessment program is implemented in the 8 provinces of Bamyan, Parwan, Kapisa, Balkh, Khost, Nimroz, Jawzjan, and Panjshir
- Community participation program at district levels in the five provinces of Kabul, Nangarhar, Balkh, Bamyan, and Herat was implemented
- National, provincial, and district literacy committee meetings were convened
- Holding voluntary literacy courses

- Voluntary courses are set up through literacy army in cooperation with Afghanistan Civil Society Forum-organization (ACSFo)
- Three agreements were signed with Youth Deputy Ministry, Liyan Amiri Foundation (LAF), and Asem Social Foundation
- Support from private sectors, Islamic scholars, SCOs, and elites in the field of arts and sports were secured



Source: DM Literacy, 2019

In the Literacy National Strategy, the age of the literacy learners who can enrol in the literacy courses is 15 and above but the age group of 15-24 is the top priority for literacy courses planned for 1398.

The strategy confirms that the literacy rate will increase from 36% in 1392 to 60% in 1399 (for women from 20% to 50% and for men, from 50% to 70%). Though it is annually planned what number of courses and considered where to be, operational plans are not developed based on the needs of local areas and illiterate population.

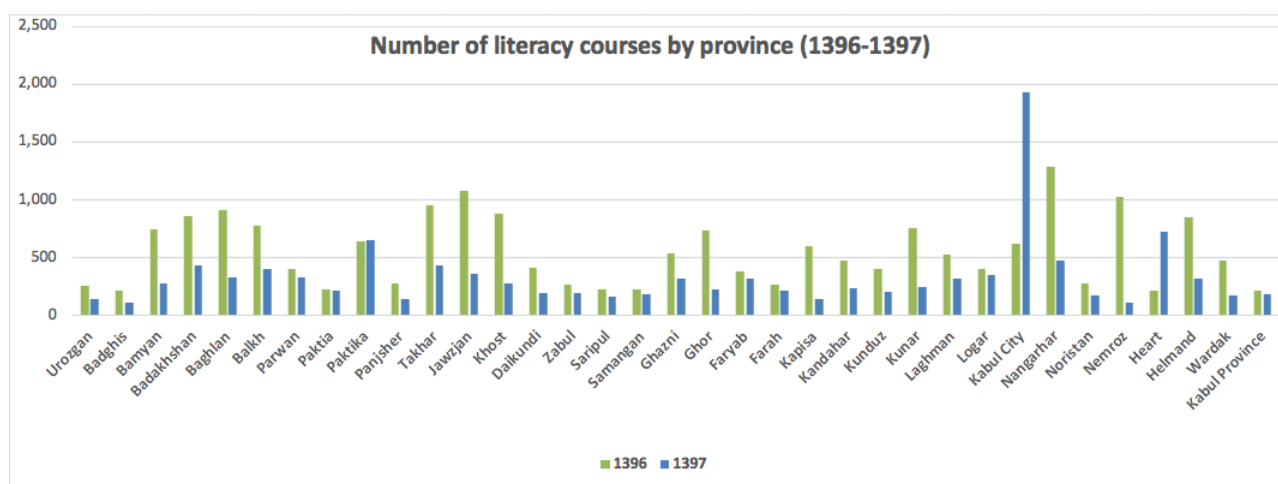
Recommendations: Given that the resources are limited, MoE/DM literacy needs to develop a prioritization plan for adult education based on cost-effectiveness analysis to determine which age categories should be considered as top priority for literacy courses. It is, therefore suggested to consider the age group of 15-24 as top priority to be focused on and then 24 and above. Also, as most of children's time is spent with their mothers at home, it is recommended to focus on these categories so that they can have a more positive and constructive role in their children education and upbringing. All literacy operational plans need to be developed based on needs assessment

and surveys that capture information on families with illiterate members in the local areas making the operational plans more effective.

### *Life-long/continuous learning*

Eradicating illiteracy all over the country is an important goal of the NESP III. To achieve the goal, developing an effective literacy system is required to facilitate teaching both reading and writing to adults and enhance their competencies for better daily life. Based on SDG, lifelong learning is one of the important approaches in literacy programs. In other words, adult learners, through lifelong learning, acquire skills and competencies relevant to their jobs and daily life. For this purpose, a needs assessment at national level is necessary, and also, developing literacy curriculum using the local capacity and publicizing literacy while paying attention to job market in each province is highly emphasized<sup>28</sup>.

The distribution of literacy courses across provinces over a two-year period is demonstrated by the figure below:



### DM Literacy 1397

The overall objective of literacy national strategy is to help people aged 15 and above to have access to life-long learning after completing literacy courses

Literacy course established by DM literacy in cooperation with partners teaching literacy for 9 months is not enough and do not lead to sustainable literacy.

DM literacy owns 68 literacy schools in 21 provinces to provide opportunities for literacy learners to continue their education but these schools only respond to 0.4% of those complete literacy courses

<sup>28</sup> MOE/DR

Also, 17 community learning centres (CLCs) are in the five provinces of Kabul, Balkh, Badghis, Bamyan, and Nangarhar. These centres are established in cooperation with UNESCO and other NGOs, it is a 2-year program teaching literacy plus a vocation. There is no clear concept of life-long learning in literacy programs especially at province and district levels.

In spite of continued attention to the importance of addressing low levels of literacy, the rates remain low. While LD has been struggling for decades to achieve its goal and some progress could be found, the organisational setup between central and provincial level is incoherent and inadequate, and resources grossly incommensurate with needs. Some of the main challenges could be summarised

There is a big need for public awareness on literacy education. Most of the people do not know about the availability of literacy courses in their own villages and districts. If people do not know the existence of literacy courses, they will not go to literacy courses nor send their family members to literacy courses even if they are interested in learning literacy. In addition, some people are not supportive of literacy education at all. As for these people, it is necessary to change their minds towards literacy education so that they will join literacy courses or they will send their family members to literacy courses. Basically, community influential people are supportive of literacy education, but again most of them are unaware of the existence of literacy courses and therefore, they do little for promoting literacy education.

Through public awareness it would be effective to introduce the positive changes of the successful graduates, of their acquired skills and concrete example of what learners are able of doing after becoming literate in order to let people imagine what they could learn and what they could be after learning literacy. Also, since it is found that many people are interested in learning Islamic issues, it would be attractive and promotive if PLC and DLC provide the information of teaching Islamic issues in literacy course and the example of learners who have learned Islamic issues in literacy course at the timing of introduction of literacy courses.

Some aspects of the current literacy curriculum do not fit to people's needs. Therefore, the current curriculum should be reviewed and revised based on potential and current learners' needs. For example, Islamic issues are in higher demand than other topics. Also, it seems that many learners do not acquire competencies in mathematics within the 9-month period of the literacy course. It is necessary to review the current required competency level in mathematics and/ or the current teaching methods of mathematics and/ or the current duration of the literacy course. Many comments found that the current 9-months length of the literacy course was too short and it should be longer so that literacy learners were really able to acquire necessary literacy skills.

Besides, vocational courses could be considered in addition to the literacy course so that more people could be attracted to start learning literacy.

Recommendations: For a coordinated management purposes and in order for literacy learners to continue their courses, it is recommended to replace the current structure of having a literacy unit at PED, with adult education schools in each district and out-reach classes under this schools in the villages and remote areas.

Life-long learning needs to be redefined based on the context of Afghanistan.

Literacy textbooks are developed only for grades 1-3 but it is recommended to develop textbooks up to grade 12 based on the adult needs and requirements.

#### *Utilization of various resources and facilities for adult learning*

- In spite the fact that MoE has signed an agreement with Haj Ministry to use mosques for literacy purposes but no mechanism is determined yet and there are still barriers in using mosques for literacy course
- In NESP III, it is recommended that GE schools should be used for literacy purposes but so there has been no coordination between DM literacy and DM/GE to materialize this recommendation.
- A public awareness to encourage people to provide venues and other facilities for literacy courses would be very effective in addressing the shortage of facilities and space.

#### *Recommendations*

- Follow up from DM literacy can reveal why coordination is not to the satisfaction level in terms of using mosques for literacy purposes
- DM literacy and DM general education need to improve their coordination so that GE schools can be used for literacy courses and literacy schools when they are not used by GE students.
- EJSR findings demonstrate that public awareness programs have been very effective in encouraging people to support literacy programs and it should further improved and expanded. Also people who have supported literacy programs should be appreciated in a way they deserve.

A policy needs to be developed on how to mobilize communities to promote literacy and voluntary works in this regard.

#### *Providing education based on the country economic and market needs for (TVET)*

- DM literacy in cooperation with UNESCO has developed 4 types of curricula: tailoring, gardening, agriculture, and beekeeping. The purpose of these curricula is to improve people's livelihood and link literacy to job markets. This project is piloted in five provinces and will be implemented next year nationally.
- Jobs are not categorized based on people's needs and their life conditions in technical/vocational schools and institutes

Recommendation: MoE and TVET in cooperation with other key stakeholders like ministry of social affairs and MoPH conduct a survey on identifying different job opportunities and provide literacy tailored for people's life realities.

#### **QUALITY AND RELEVANT EDUCATION: STUDENTS' COMPETENCY**

*Assess the responsiveness and relevance of current policies, regulations, and current practices of formative assessment. Teachers' perception and use of formative assessment. Overview of feasibility of conducting national exam end of G9 at national level. Review of education/work opportunities for those who pass G9 national exam.*

The Afghanistan Ministry of Education (MoE) with support from development partners is undertaking a range of activities to enhance the quality of education in Afghanistan as part of the work towards the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) III. This includes a reform of the primary and secondary national curriculum and the development of a National Assessment Framework for Afghanistan (NAFA), both of which have been supported by UNESCO and UNICEF, and it includes a reform of the training of teachers and the development and distribution of textbooks, which has been supported by the World Bank and USAID.

##### **1 FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT AND NATIONAL EXAMS**

Educational Assessment is the systematic feedback of teaching and learning processes or the results thereof. Classroom-based assessment is an essential component of a comprehensive learning assessment system. It can include assessment for formative or summative purposes. Formative assessment provides teachers and students with diagnostic information about where students are in their learning, including information about strengths and gaps. This information can then be used by teachers and students to identify the next steps to enhance teaching and learning. In best practice, formative assessment is a continuous process and it is therefore sometimes referred to as 'continuous assessment'.

Summative assessment is used to draw conclusions about where students are in their learning at the end of a particular stage, such as at the end of a curriculum topic or at a mid-point in a grade level.

Ministry of Education is planning to have mainly three types of assessments in the education system in Afghanistan: assessment in class, national assessment, and national exams to assess the students learning quality and achievements. More specifically, national assessment is to assess the education system quality in terms of weaknesses and strengths, and what measures needed to be taken to bring changes to the education system.

The National Assessment Framework for Afghanistan (NAFA) provides the strategic direction for learning assessment in Afghanistan to 2021 in line with the NESP (III) in four goals.

The first goal of the NAFA is to strengthen classroom-based assessment for formative purposes in order to enhance teaching and learning outcomes.

The second goal of the NAFA is to develop standardised end-of-year classroom assessments that could be used for formative and summative purposes.

The third goal of the NAFA is to develop and implement a monitoring assessment that can be used to provide information about the quality of the education system with the ultimate goal of improving students' learning outcomes.

The fourth goal of the NAFA involves investigating whether Afghanistan would benefit from participating in international assessment programs in the future (beyond 2021).

The MoE reform document emphasizes on the formative assessment and its use in class for improving the teaching methodology and student learning. Also, this document addresses the formative assessment system, which should be adjusted based on the international criteria.

The National Education Strategic Plan noted that assessment techniques should be used to ensure student learning.

The National Assessment Framework for Afghanistan (NAFA) has been developed by ACER. A technical team from MoE different departments is created to implement phase one of the NAFA and improve their capacity under the leadership of the Supervision Department.

There are no experts in the field of assessment, at the ministry level, therefore, MoE depends on ACER activity and decision.

It is emphasized on formative assessment in the new curriculum framework. ("formative assessment methods should be used to receive information from student learning and challenges." Page 7).

There are no documents about formative assessment available but there is an exam policy in which homework and classroom activities are mentioned, but this document is traditional. (the document revised in 1391)

Lack of awareness about the National Assessment Framework for Afghanistan (NAFA) at the provincial level is a challenge.

Lack of procedures and guidelines for teacher and school principals for the implementation of formative assessment in class.

Recommendations on formative assessment:

The exam policy should be revised and to make it responsive to practical needs, a committee including relevant departments, teachers and principals should be formed.

Workshop for provincial level should be held to make them aware of the NAFA and the importance of educational assessment, especially formative assessment.

Support the learning assessment directorate in providing the applied strategies for implementation of the formative assessment, and academic capacity building of staff. (this is the



only way to make the ministry of education independent in planning for the implementation of the NAFA)

In the ministry of education policy should be noted that formative assessment is part of the teaching methodologies and teachers have to implement formative assessment.

A Review of the current status of implementation of the formative assessment in classroom suggests that formative assessment is not as widely used as expected because for example the existing examination policy does not cover the concept of formative assessment or it is not elaborated enough. Moreover, as most teachers are not trained on formative assessment, they implement the assessment based on their own experiences which is not necessarily based on the principles of formative assessment.

Overcrowded classes (more than 86 students) hinder the implementation of formative assessment. In practice, teachers have an assessment notebook with them. They implement three assessments by the end academic mid-year and expect students to get certain grades/marks. These assessments consist of homework and classroom activities and each has two marks (total 4 marks). The assessment notebooks are provided either by school or teachers personally purchase them from markets. The Afghan Children Read Program has trained teachers on formative assessment and how to use continuous assessment book for teachers in their classroom.

Recommendations on how to mitigate the situation comprise the following interventions:

Development of educational materials for use in diverse formative assessment techniques in class in cooperation with the relevant department and other institutions (especially for overcrowded classes). The continuous assessment book developed by ACR is good, but it does not include the techniques in the training.

Principals should know about formative assessment and techniques for supervision and ensure that formative assessment is done in class.

A Review the Use of formative assessment by trained teachers and their effectiveness suggests that in the teacher training curriculum, there is a brief overview on formative assessment, but teachers believe it is not clear enough. Formative assessment is covered in INSET 6 and all teachers trained on it, but this training is not considered enough.

A 12-day workshop on formative assessment was held with technical and financial support from UNICEF for CBE teachers and some general education school teachers. However, teachers said this training was not sufficient and they wanted more training as most of them could not apply in class what they had learnt. Also, the training book and materials were not feasible in consideration of the training time.

Some teachers have participated in Promote training programs, where formative assessment was also included in the workshop. According teachers, these trainings are not competency-based. Due to the lack of supervisors' awareness of formative assessment, they cannot supervise and support teachers.

Based on the academic supervision report, there is a little difference between trained and untrained teachers in terms of student learning achievement.

The following recommendations were made:

Due to the disparity and lack of effective management of education in the field of developmental assessment, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with stakeholders, should develop an educational assessment training system in cooperation with the teacher training centres, supervisors, school principals and teachers.

Specific teams at the national and provincial level including a master trainer should be trained to facilitate the training.

Awareness program should be launched for education authorities at central, provincial and district level on the importance of formative assessment.

### *National exam*

In Afghanistan's education system, there are different exams: end-of-year exams, mid-year exams, saame exam<sup>29</sup>, and mazerati exam<sup>30</sup>. However, there is still another exam newly included in the education reform policy called "national exam", which is to be taken at the end of grade 9. The main purpose of the national exam is to assess students at the end of compulsory education (grade 9), after which students based on the result of the exam will decide one of the three education paths: technical and vocational, Islamic, or general education.

While the education authorities at province level generally agree with the implementation of the national exam, they call attention to a number of issues:

The insecurity of some districts will prevent the implementation the national exam.

Students' who lack interest in Islamic and TVET may leave their education.

If the exam is non-central, examination transparency may be vague.

Field interviews from the EJSR 2018 point to the following challenges: It is difficult to Implement the national exam in the current situation for the following reasons:

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<sup>29</sup> Exams for those students who have not been able to attend classes.

<sup>30</sup> Exams for those who can't take the exam because illness or any other legitimate excuses.

Because of the significance of the test national exam results, there is a risk of manipulation and misconduct. The student's level of education is low, and a large number of students may not be able to obtain the right result and cause the student's mental injury and will leave the education. Lack of sufficient capacity at Islamic education and TVET to attract graduates from the 9th grade. Lack of awareness of parents, locals, school officials, teachers and students about the importance and objectives of the national exam.

This test can be piloted in several provinces, such as Kabul, Herat and Balkh, in order to form a decision base.

Opinions on the education and work opportunities for students after entering the grade 9 national exam and linking it to the socio-economic situation of graduates include the following: If the warrant this certificate (end of G9), the graduates of the ninth grade can start their business activities in the public and private sector.

Whenever a national exam is implemented at the end of the ninth grade and providing training and job opportunities for the ninth-grade students, after graduation from grade 12 the probability of immediate entry into the job market is very high.

If students are trained after the end of class 9 in entrepreneurship and business, they can, after graduating from grade 12 or during their studies, have a job without having to pressure on the government to create a job.

## *2 TEACHERS: COMPETENT AND SUFFICIENT TEACHING FORCES<sup>31</sup>*

*status of teachers against the competencies. Responsiveness of training programs for teachers against the teachers' competency. Teacher qualification policy and its implementation feasibility (financial/capacity implications). Recommendations for teacher assessment (for qualifications and performance improvement). Implementation of teacher accreditation and credentialing system.*

### *STATUS OF TEACHERS AGAINST THE COMPETENCIES.*

Directorate of teacher education has provided the competency document in 2008 but these competencies are general and are not defined by education levels and grades.

Teacher training is held based on competencies at all education levels by teacher education directorate.

There is continuous holding of workshops by science centre in science subjects.

Training of some teachers by ACR project at primary level from grade 1 and 3 regarding to teaching method and some of teacher competencies.

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<sup>31</sup> This section is partly based on WB/TPS and partly on EJSR 2018 Key Findings from the Field: Laghman, Kandahar, Herat, Samangan, MOE

Hiring of teachers were not based on their skills for grade 1 and 3. Generally these teachers don't have the necessary awareness for providing such as this training for children. As authorities have said some of the teachers have been appointed to grade 1 and 3 even they don't have teaching ability.

According to the authorities 50% of teachers are in lack of professional skills and this percentage reaches to 70% at district level.

It is recommended, that the existing school teachers are assessed according to defined competencies, and learning assessment results at different levels should be planned and implemented with cooperation of partner NGOs.

*A review of the responsiveness of teacher training programs to needs based on teachers' competencies highlighted the following findings:*

According to teacher training authorities' 2 year training program and short term training program conduct and implement based on teacher competencies.

Creating of primary department in teacher training centre by support of GIZ.

Up to now the teacher competencies have not been provided at primary level, the department and its members are being created.

Teachers before passing the competency assessment were in some cases introduced at random to short term training programs between teachers at school level for introduction to the training program and this training may not be according to teacher needs.

According to joint sector review findings, subject knowledge is one of the vital competencies of a teacher but teachers often do not have mastery of it.

In addition, number of many teachers are not aware of teaching methodology, class management, student assessment, partner support and the utility of sharing of experiences between teachers, which are essential teacher competencies.

Training of ACR was regarding teacher competencies but it has not taught complete teacher skills for grade 1-3.

The following recommendations have been made in addressing these shortcomings:

In the first step teacher competencies should be developed based on education level and made at teachers' disposal so that they have knowledge of these competencies.

Establishing a primary department in teacher training centres should go ahead slowly and it is necessary to establish special departments at other levels, and teachers should get training by education level.

Establishing of special department for different education levels, needs teachers' competencies at that level.

The teachers, before being introduced to short term training, should be assessed based on defined competencies at education level and the teachers should get training according to assessment results.

*Review of teachers' qualification upgrade feasibility and its financial and capacity impact on government:*

The education reform document has emphasized that the minimum standard of being professional should be upgraded from grade 14 to bachelor but according to EJSR findings, being bachelor is not a criterion for being "professional", i.e. competent j teaching. Some 12 grade graduate teachers are more competent than both 14 graduate and bachelor teachers.

In the current situation the existing 12 graduate teachers for their capacity building should continue their education in teacher training centres to get the grade 14 graduation certificate so this is the minimum standard of being professional.

Right now, because of lack of capacity of governmental universities, all existing 14 graduate teachers cannot continue their education to governmental universities.

In addition, there is an opportunity for registration at private universities, but on the other hand it is costly and most teachers cannot continue their education at private universities.

On the other hand, teachers are busy daily with teaching business and at night they have to get ready for tomorrow's lesson, if they were to continue their education at night at university, it might have negative impact on the teaching quality at school.

The upgrading of teacher qualifications from grade 14 to bachelor is more costly from an economic perspective. On one hand the government has to pay much for teacher education and on the other hand teachers are obliged to serve their time for several years to continue their education and it is possible the teacher pays less attention to the quality of lessons in class.

**Recommendation:**

In the first step the current teachers should be assessed based on teachers' competency and prove the skills level of the current teacher. Then a decision should be made on whether becoming professional, capacity building of teachers to bachelor is the best solution or by introducing some short training could improve the teacher skills.

It seems necessary to conduct a special research regarding to teachers' qualification, to what extent teacher qualifications impact on education quality and learning, based on which a decision could be made: do the teachers need for qualification upgrade or short-term training?

*Review of teachers' assessment current system in order to improve their assessment process*

For the first time school teachers were assessed based on teacher competencies in 2009 and according to this assessment the salary of teachers was increased.

In the current situation teachers are annually assessed by academic supervision members who have managerial influence on teachers' step upgrade.

According to teachers' speech this assessment is not effective for the following reasons:

Academic members do not have sufficient capacity for teacher assessment.

The results of the assessment are not shared with teachers in spite of the purpose of the assessment is teacher step upgrade.

The teacher assessment results analyse little and are not utilized in decision making.

The impact of teachers' annual assessment on teaching quality and learning is questionable.

In short term, teachers' annual assessment should be based on defined teacher competencies and trying more so that teacher annual assessment results should have its own impact on teachers' specific capacity building program according to students' teaching and learning quality.

The education reform document regarding teacher skills and competencies assessment has pointed out the following issues:

The teacher skills and competencies mechanism should improve.

Tools and guidelines on teachers' assessment should improve.

Every teacher should assess continuously and according to his/ her competencies be credentialed.

Teacher credentialing should be done every 3 years according to annual assessment results and teacher competency assessment results.

#### *Teacher credentialing and accrediting system*

Teacher credentialing and accrediting system has developed by Teacher Education Directorate with support of Canada TESO NGO and implemented as pilot in Kabul, Nangarhar and Bamyan. However, while this process has been effective from Teacher Education Department perspective, this process has stopped due to lack of budget. This process will be continued next years through EGRA support.

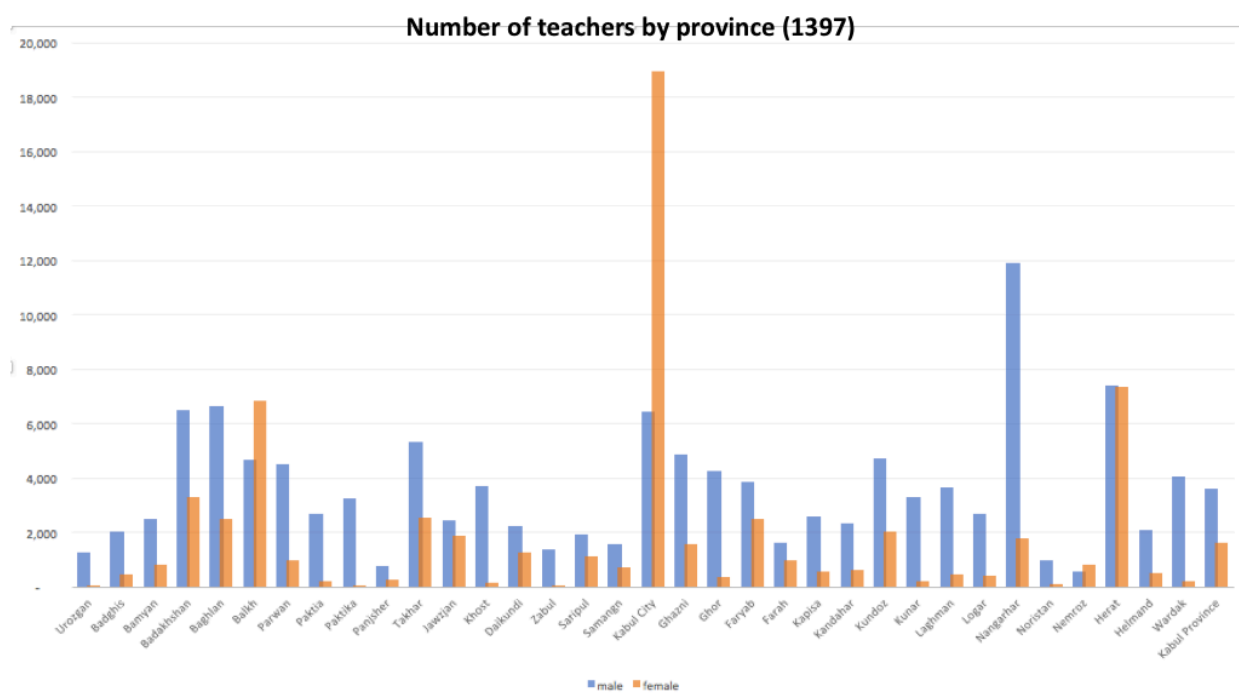
The relevant authorities are demanding the institutionalization of credentialing and accrediting system and point out regarding to the implementation of the system and add that the system will play an effective role for improvement of the quality of educational centres and consolidation of teachers' professional skills.

There is no accurate, centralized, and up-to-date registry of all teachers employed by the MoE. There are multiple databases on teachers, but not all are frequently updated, and none of them cover all types of teacher contracts. The most comprehensive and accurate database on employed teachers is the payroll registration database. However, not all employees are correctly labelled as teachers or non-teachers in this database, and it does not include all types of temporary (*haquzama*) contract teachers. Different datasets on *haquzama* teachers showed conflicting numbers. As a result, the WB Teacher Policy Study was unable to determine the number of people employed as teachers by the MoE, or the number of teacher full time equivalents (FTEs), with full accuracy.

There has been progress, but uneven growth and large inequity in teacher provision. Since 2002, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has made tremendous progress in its capacity to manage the teacher workforce, despite the multitude of challenges it faced. However, not all of Afghanistan's

provinces have witnessed improvements and growth evenly. The World Bank Teacher Policy Study (WB/TPS) describes how progress has been uneven, and calls for a more diversified teacher management approach that considers regional, gender and urban vs. rural discrepancies, in order to promote equity, efficiency and effectiveness.

The distribution of teachers across provinces is demonstrated by the figure below:



Source: MOE/EMIS, 1397

There are more than a quarter of a million teachers but on a variety of contracts. In 2017, there were approximately 218,261 people employed as teachers by the MoE<sup>32</sup>. This includes 203,641 *tashkeel* teachers (teachers employed in the approved 'permanent' staffing structure), and an additional 14,620 temporarily contracted teachers (*haquzama* outside *tashkeel*). However, a significant number of *tashkeel* teachers have an additional second full-time teacher contract (*haquzama* inside *tashkeel*), and the total number of teacher FTEs is estimated at 239,465. The number of *tashkeel* teachers increased significantly prior to 2013 and thereafter plateaued. Data on *haquzama* contracts appeared unreliable and exact numbers could not be determined. This poses a challenge to almost all analyses of teacher statistics

Teacher qualifications vary from bachelor degree to less than grade 12. The minimum education qualification of a 'qualified' *tashkeel* teacher (teaching grades 1 to 12 in primary, lower and higher

<sup>32</sup> WBTPS

secondary) is grade 14, the equivalent of high school plus two additional years (usually completed at a teacher training college). The number of 'qualified' tashkeel teachers almost doubled in recent years, from 61,091 in 2011, to 114,762 in 2016. And the percentage of tashkeel teachers with a grade 14 (or higher) qualification rose from 33% in 2011, to 57% in 2016 and 77% in 1397/2018<sup>33</sup>. Teacher qualifications are rapidly increasing from 66% in 1395/2016 more than 86 % of female teachers were qualified in 1397/2018 , whereas 74 % of male teachers were qualified compared to 53% in 1395/2016<sup>34</sup>. However, the national averages hide dramatic differences in the qualifications of teachers across different provinces. In some provinces, including Paktika, Daikundi, Zabul, Kandahar, Uruzgan, and Badghis, less than 20% of teachers are 'grade 14' educated. In Kabul City, Balkh, Jawzjan, Faryab and Kapisa, more than 75% of teachers are 'grade 14' educated (in 2016). Qualification discrepancies across provinces have not decreased in the past seven years. (WB/TPS)

Currently, those teachers who are grade 14, are considered qualified but in the education reform policy it is proposed that this criterion needs to be promoted to bachelor degree to compensate their subject insufficient knowledge. However, there is no assessment mechanism to assess the incumbent teachers to prioritize them for promotion to higher education. This assessment mechanism is important as MoE cannot afford to upgrade all teachers all at once.

According to the MOE/DRS the proportionate teacher qualifications are about 16% with bachelor degree, 48% with grade 14, and 32% with grade 12 certificate (EMIS, 2017).

Formal qualifications and teaching competencies do not always correspond and they are not systematically assessed. The MoE general directorate of teacher training has developed teacher competencies in 2008. The 6 competencies have mainly focused on learning and teaching principles, and teacher certification but they are not yet shared with all teachers, only community school teachers are trained based on the competencies. In the education reform policy, it is required that the competencies need to be developed based on the three levels of education (primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary) and based on subjects, and that teachers need to be trained in these competencies.

There is no nation-wide standardized testing of teacher *abilities* within the pool of MoE employed teachers. However, a recent study<sup>35</sup> suggests that a significant portion of the teachers is severely *under qualified*. For example, half of the (primary school) teachers tested, were unable to divide double digits by single digits or complete a number sequence.

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<sup>33</sup> MOE EMIS 1397 Teacher Education Level

<sup>34</sup> MOE EMIS 1397 Teachers by gender ...

<sup>35</sup> *The Learning Crisis in Afghanistan, Results of the SABER Service Delivery Survey 2017* (PRELIMINARY DRAFT). P.56-63. The World Bank, 2018. (SOURCE WB/TPS)



Three types of teacher assessment are used to assess teachers' responsibility in the education system: assessments by the academic supervision, inspection, and human resource directorates. But there is some interference between their tasks in the field. The three directorates do the assessments for different purposes like admin, academic, and corruption. While the directorate of teacher training only provides training but has assessment of teachers they train through their teacher training programs. The other issue is that though teacher training directorate has developed the competencies, the academic supervision directorate does not develop the observation tools to capture those competencies. In fact, there is little relationship between teacher training and academic supervision regarding teacher assessment tasks.

If classroom-based assessment is to be effective in raising levels of student achievement, it should be based on modern understandings of teaching, learning and assessment. Therefore, strengthening understandings of current learning and assessment theory and practices amongst stakeholders will be beneficial. For example, teacher training and professional development that covers the relationship between teaching, learning and assessment, interpreting assessment results and effective pedagogy could assist in building assessment literacy.

Credentialing teachers and accreditation of teacher training colleges: The Credentialing and accreditation project was launched in 2012 and continued through 2016. It was piloted in Bamyan, Kabul, and Nangarhar by teacher training directorate with financial aid from Canada. The project will be resumed in 2019. No progress report on the achievements is available yet.

### **Female teachers**

There is significant progress, one third of teachers are female but most work in big cities. Further addressing the gender gap will require strong political will and far-reaching policy reforms. 33% of *tashkeel* teachers are female and 67% are male (2017). Converted, the gender parity index (GPI: the number of females per male) for *tashkeel* teachers is 0.50. In the past seven years, the GPI for *tashkeel* teachers has improved somewhat. In 2011 there were only 44 female *tashkeel* teachers per 100 male teachers (GPI 0.44), in 2017 this number had risen to 50. However, at the current pace the MoE is not reaching its targets of GPI 0.69 by 2021, as expressed in the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP III). Given limited turnover in the teacher workforce, the MoE has limited opportunities in improving the GPI, and addressing the gender-gap will require far reaching policy reforms in teacher recruitment.

More than half of all female *tashkeel* teachers in Afghanistan work in Kabul city, Balkh or Herat province, and the national average GPI hides extreme differences in the teacher gender gap between provinces. In the 17 provinces with the lowest GPI, there are on average only 12 female teachers *per 100 male teachers* (GPI 0.12). Importantly, in the past seven years, those provinces with the least female teachers (in 2011) have made almost no progress in recruiting more female teachers. In these provinces, improvements in the GPI are *marginal* (+ 0.02), whereas in the provinces with the highest GPI (in 2011), progress is more significant (+ 0.11).

Targeted female recruitment is the most effective tool to increase women into the teacher workforce. According to the IARCSC, female candidates for the teacher entry exam received additional bonus points increasing their chances of being selected. In addition, teacher vacancies were gender specific. However, it is yet unclear to what extent the IARCSC was successful in increasing the number of women hired into the teacher workforce, especially in those provinces where the gender gap is most pronounced. The reforms also have done little to facilitate rural teacher applicants. Although too early to assess at this point, the initial data published by the IARCSC shows that in some rural provinces (e.g. Uruzgan) only half of the shortlisted candidates collected their exam ID and submitted their biometric data. And even more worrying, the selection method applied in the new process, will potentially result in a significant loss of qualified and willing candidates, as candidates apply only for a single vacancy, and qualified but unsuccessful candidates are not offered alternative positions. (WB/TPS)

There is little renewal of the teacher work force because teachers tend to stay on payroll and attrition rates are low; in the 2010-2016 period between 0.6% and 1.0% of *tashkeel* teachers retired from active duty annually. That is, *each year*, out of a thousand *tashkeel* teachers, between six and ten teachers retired, on average 1,570 teachers per year. This category includes termination of employment due to retirement, death and voluntary contract termination. The attrition rates for female teachers are somewhat lower than for male teachers. However, datasets on teacher attrition appear to be incomplete or inaccurate.

There is no centralized MoE database on teacher vacancies or applications. The WB/TPS study was not able to find a list of teacher vacancies or applications across provinces. Comparing different datasets, the study estimated 11,525 teacher vacancies across the country in 2017, or on average 329 *tashkeel* teacher vacancies per province. Estimated vacancies are evenly distributed across most provinces (between 1% and 10% vacant positions). Four provinces have an exceptionally high percentage of vacancies, including Zabul (51%), Daikundi (49%), Panjshir (24%) and Badghis (19%). However, dataset discrepancies are likely inflating estimates in this calculation.

#### TEACHER QUALIFICATION POLICY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

There are two aspects of the interaction between teachers and students. One has to do with the number of students per teacher, the so-called pupil-teacher ratio (PTR), and the other has to do with teacher qualifications and experience.

Average PTR: The national pupil-teacher ratio (PTR), dividing the number of enrolled students by the number of *tashkeel* teachers, rose from 41 in 2011, to 46 in 2017. This is because the number of enrolled students increased faster than the number of *tashkeel* teachers and *haquzama* contracts. However, if the PTR is calculated using *attending* students and total teacher FTEs, the index increased from 28 in 2011, to 30 in 2017. (WB/TPS)

Effective and merit-based teacher recruitment is a critical tool for promoting teacher quality. However, in the past years, the merit-based recruitment of new teachers appears to have been significantly undermined by nepotism and corruption. Until 2018, teacher recruitment was managed and implemented at the provincial level. PEDs openly deviated from national civil service regulations, and the recruitment process appeared to be vulnerable to corruption at almost every step. Already in 2015, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) report stressed the vulnerabilities to corruption across all steps of the teacher recruitment process. (WB/TPS)

#### *RESPONSIVENESS OF TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR TEACHERS AGAINST THE TEACHERS' COMPETENCY.*

There are various approaches to upgrading the professional competency of teachers with little or no formal qualifications as well as upgrading those teachers who need to improve their subject knowledge and or teaching skills.

INSET is MOE's short-term courses, which are implemented by TTC instructors or contracted instructors. Negative comments from the field mention that the INSET workshops are held at class hours and takes teachers' official class time, in addition, some teachers complain that the INSET trainers are not professional or competent and that they cannot teach competently.

Another type of training is workshops often run by NGOs. A common complaint is that NGO workshops are mostly short-term so teachers cannot learn any subjects matter or teaching methodology. Teacher capacity improvement short-term workshops are just a showy gesture without any effectiveness. Therefore, longer workshops rather than short-term ones should be designed and implemented.

A recurrent complaint is that there is no plan for training the teachers. The teacher candidates for capacity building programs are not selected on basis of a needs assessment or by any other criteria; they participate in the workshops based on the connections they have and some participate multiple times (there are still teachers who have not had a chance to participate the workshops at all). They sometimes seem to be selected by tossing a coin. It has been recommended that the academic supervision should intervene and select teachers for the workshops

Many teachers selected for the workshops are interested in getting the certificates not teaching skills, and about 45% of them do not get the skills the workshops are intended for.

Many express reservations about the recruitment and training of Haqulzahma teachers who don't have enough motivation for teaching so instead of hiring these kinds of teachers, permanent teachers should be recruited.

Visits to the field identified examples of a number of successful approaches to upgrading teacher competencies. One of the effective approaches to improve teachers' capacity in districts is to ask professional teachers to train non-professional teachers. This solution has been very effective and an increase of those who passed the university entrance exam (Kankor) can be attributed to this factor.

Another approach is capacity building programs for TTC instructors, which are short-term and long-term. The short-term programs of 5 days, however, have not been instructive for instructors. To the contrary, a long-term workshop that was held in Mazar Sharif for a month was very useful for TTC instructors because there was enough time for learning and discussion. Another example of a successful programme to improve teachers' professional skills was establishing a primary education department in TTC for which a number of TTC instructors were sent to India and Dubai to learn about primary education.

*RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER ASSESSMENT (FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT).*

There are four kinds of external teacher assessment in addition to teachers' self-assessment:

1. Academic supervision based on their lesson observation form No 1 (25 items)
2. Assessment by education directorate for their promotion
3. Assessment by school principal and head teacher (by attending the class)
4. By parents in cooperation with supervision member in school Shura

Academic supervision members based on form No 1 (25 items) assess teachers three times a year and give feedback to teachers while not interfering with normal teaching process of teachers. In the three supervisions, in the first one, only observation is done, in the second, the feedback on teachers teaching is given to them, and in the third, if teachers do not respond to the feedback, a sample lesson is given to the teacher in a way student do not notice that they guide the teacher. The result of the academic supervision is submitted to the Directorate of Teacher Training and Directorate of Education.

Opinions on academic supervision vary between provinces and districts. Some people claim that the assessment done by academic supervision members is of good quality but rarely happens. Supervision is not continuous, just two or three times a year. This is worse in the districts. If the assessment was done properly, it would help teachers improve their competencies but supervision is not available always and everywhere.

Other interviewees maintain that supervision should be more professional, and recommend that professional and competent supervisors should be recruited. They complain that supervisors act more like inspectors and that they don't teach any sample lessons so that teachers should learn from them. Instead, they should be supportive and should increase the number of supervisions, especially in the districts. Another challenge is that number of supervisors is not enough to cover all schools in the districts; only 15% of schools are covered by the existing supervisors.

Principals and head teachers need more training on how to assess teachers. Teachers are assessed and supervised by school principal and academic supervision members but it does not benefit teaching activities because the results are not shared with teachers. They should not only fill in a few forms as a result of supervision but they should also interview teachers and observe classes to capture more qualitative data based on which they should be able to advice and support teachers.

Lack of security in some districts hindered supervisors to go to those districts as a result, the school principals receive supervision forms and after filling them, they send them back to the centre which is more formalities than true supervision and assessment.

#### *IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHER ACCREDITATION AND CREDENTIALING SYSTEM.*

MoE states that they have developed a Teacher Credentialing System. According to MoE, the framework for teachers' certification was developed as part of the TCAP program financed by the Canadian government and piloted in schools in three provinces. Likewise, rules and regulations and frameworks for TTC accreditation have been developed.

In early 1396/ 2018, MOE signed an MOU with MoHE to provide opportunities for teachers to upgrade their education level to a Bachelor Degree. The implementation of this MOU requires funding which has not been considered in the 1397 National Budget. MoE and MoHE will work together to get a budget allocation for this activity in the 1398 Budget. Likewise, MoE reported in this second quarter that they have prepared the list of under-qualified teachers who need upgrading.

Additionally, another MoU was signed with MoHE, aiming to provide practicum experience for teacher education students. MoE has included ongoing classroom support to existing teachers in NESP III, and EQRA-designated Academic Supervisors will also provide classroom support.

Extending practical teaching experience in classrooms as a component in teaching preparation programs. In this regard, MoE reported that, the "Credit System" which is an active learning system, has been implemented in all TTCs and credit for practical teaching has been increased from 4 to 6 credits.

Education authorities in the provinces welcome upgrading teachers from 14 to 16 but caution that private universities may not educate teachers with the quality expected. They also mention the challenge of shortage of teachers in classes as teachers go to university and there are no substitute teachers.

While welcoming the idea of upgrading teachers from grade 14 to 16, Provincial Education authorities emphasize that at the same time teachers' salary should be raised so that they do not look for a second job that has negative effect on their teaching quality. Further, they suggest that these trainings need to be in the winter so that they do not interrupt teaching process during the academic year.

#### *3 AVAILABILITY OF TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIALS*

*provide update on the curriculum development process and the status of curriculum policy, framework, competencies, syllabus and textbooks. Perceptions (of teachers, students, and experts)*

*on new language curriculum for Gs 1-3 and their alignment with curriculum policy and framework. Exploring options to improve printing and distribution mechanism of the textbooks.*

#### *Qualitative review of the curriculum from development to implementation and textbooks*

Findings from the MoE MVCA indicated that the current curriculum was too large and the teaching hours were too short, both being vulnerabilities to corruption. MEC recommended a reduction in the size of the curriculum, based on findings from a systematic review. MoE has now revised the curriculum framework, including specification that the number of textbooks for each grade would be reduced, as follow:

Textbooks of grades 1-3 *from 6 to 3.*

Textbooks of grades 4-6 *from 14 to 6.*

Textbooks of grades 7-9 *from 17 to 7*

And textbooks of grades 10-12 *from 15 to 12.*

Discussions have taken place between MoE and MoHE to establish a Coordination Working Group among the MoE Curriculum Department, TTCs, and MoHE to better align school curricula and curricula of teacher education programs for primary and secondary levels<sup>36</sup>. Based on these discussions, a MoU for alignment of curricula of schools, TTCs and Universities has been developed and signed<sup>37</sup>. The TTC curriculum was deemed to be in line with general education curriculum.

Preparation of the new curriculum framework and it's being finalized.

The curriculum syllabus is prepared and it's being finalized.

The competency framework and textbook guideline design have been developed. (the teacher's guide to the implementation of activities in the text books itself, opposite of former textbooks)

New textbooks are based on competency and activities.

Teacher's guidebook provided for Physical and Health subjects up to Grade 9

Development of new textbooks for grades 4, 7, and 10 ( 30% to 50% Progress )

Current textbooks are being corrected, and are at the printing stage.

There is lack of qualified curriculum experts for the development of curricula.

The current curriculum deployment process has been stopped for more modification.

The following recommendations were made:

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<sup>36</sup> MEC 2 Quarterly Report

<sup>37</sup> MoE has informed that a Curriculum Development Working Group was formed in 2017, under the Quality Coordination Committee of their NESP Steering Committee. The Working Group consists of relevant MoE Departments (Curriculum, Teacher Education, Academic Supervision, General Education), MoHE, DPs (UNESCO, UNICEF), and civil society..

Providing facilities to ensure the development of a quality education curriculum, with emphasis on building basic capabilities that are emphasized in Education law, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Third Strategic Plan, and Education Reform Document.

Identifying and recruiting experts to improve the quality of the new curriculum

Piloting (part of) new textbooks to identify problems

Involvement of teacher training in the new curriculum development process as teachers are the main implementers of the curriculum.

*Review perception of teachers, students and experts on new language curriculum for grades 1-3 and the alignment with the curriculum policy and framework.*

The ACR project has developed reading textbooks for grade 1-3 and was implemented as a pilot in four provinces (Laghman, Kabul, Herat, and Nangarhar).

According to EJSR findings, students and teachers are satisfied with the use of new textbooks and they believe these books had positive effects on students.

The ACR project created Teacher Learning Committees for solving teachers' problems in implementing textbooks at the school level, which had so far not been addressed.

Despite these positive points, the following challenges are considerable:

Low focus on students' spelling and writing skills.

The use of difficult and irrelevant words for grade 1-3 students who can hardly understand the meaning, for example, marriage, extraction, hell.....

More focus on story memorizing than on reading comprehension.

Insertion of stories that are not relevant for content ages 7 to 9 years. For example: Emerald Story on page 153 of the third-grade textbook (Emerald Extraction).

The use of new textbooks requires materials that have not yet been made available to teachers.

Introduction of textbooks requires more time in the classroom, the current 35-45 minutes to teach is not enough

The following recommendations were made on the new ACR language curriculum for grades 1-3:

Revision of the textbooks for grade 1-3 and correction of it by ACR specialists alongside the curriculum department and of TTC.

Providing teaching learning aides by the Ministry of Education or institutions.

12 days of training for teaching new textbooks is not enough and training courses should be further developed.

Textbooks should be prepared based on the class time (35-45 mins).

Curriculum and textbooks: In the framework, it is mainly focused on the competencies in the sense that curriculum need to prepare students with life skills. The role of teachers is to act as facilitators and supporters of students to learn life skills. As student learning in the new curriculum

is more practice based than knowledge acquisition, some subjects are therefore integrated to achieve this purpose and consequently the number of subjects is reduced. For example, in the new subject of social studies, subjects like civilization, history, and geography are integrated to facilitate a common competency for students and as separate theoretical subject to be learnt by students. The competencies are fully developed.

A process has started to develop syllabi in 9 areas of learning: culture, sciences, languages, arts, sports, math, and social studies. The syllabi are all competency based and practical.

The number of subjects and their volumes are reduced in the new curriculum by integration of subjects and avoiding duplication. At primary level, the number of subjects is reduced from 7 to 4, at lower secondary from 11 to 7, and at upper secondary from 18 to 12 subjects.

Afghan Children Read (ACR) is a policy aiming to make sure that students at primary level have learned reading and writing. The project consists of developing language textbooks for grades 1-3. The policy's main focus is on five reading elements: phonology, alphabet principles, correct reading, vocabulary reservoir, and reading comprehension. So far, language textbooks, teacher's guide, formative assessment manual, and exercise books for students for grades 1-3 have been developed by ACR and distributed to some of the community-based schools. Yet, there has been no assessment by MoE of the development process. Reports from the field suggest that teachers are interested to have more training by ACR as they believe this training is very useful for them.

#### *Review the effectiveness of printing and distribution mechanism of textbooks*

Textbook printing and distribution process: books are printed by private printers, and distribution to provincial centres is done by MoE but to the districts by private suppliers. To regulate the process, there is a guideline for printing and distribution but it is not operational. MoE, therefore has signed an agreement with USAID for printing and distribution of the textbooks as well as preparing a new guideline for this regard. It is also proposed in the education reform policy that the whole process of textbooks printing and distribution should be done by private sectors. MoE has shared the printing and distribution policy with public for their comments. In practice, there are still challenges in distribution of the textbooks from Kabul down to the districts and then to schools. Also, there has been no assessment of either the printing process, distribution process, or the involvement of the private sectors in the process.

During the field visits the following findings were made:

Provide online OTIMS system for distribution process of textbooks.

There is lack of appropriate management of the distribution of textbooks. Therefore, there are many problems in access to textbook on time (Especially in districts). The textbooks are not distributed according to student needs, therefore textbooks often do not correspond to demands in terms of number, subjects and language.

Required textbooks are not despatched from the centre and there is lack of textbooks at all education levels.



The process of distributing textbooks is very long.  
Students use old books that have passed their depreciation period.

The following recommendations have been made:

In the new guidelines, the process should be shorter to save time in the procurement process.

Simplifying the procurement process for the transfer of books to schools.

Checking and quality assuring the content of textbook cartons in the centre before sending them to provinces. Privatization of the distribution of textbooks.

Needs assessment is done by the planning officer and supervision members based on the tables received from districts. Then they send the results to the Ministry of Education for further action. They send the needs for textbooks to MoE before the end of fiscal year.

The general lack of textbooks in schools is a serious challenge and there has been no improvements in the situation. The students in Kabul, Laghman and Nangarhar (first quarter provincial visits), Herat, Parwan and Panjsher (second quarter provincial visits) still struggle without appropriate books: In Nangarhar, the students of grades 7, 8 and 9 reported they have been facing an extreme lack of textbooks - students reported they had not received books from MoE in these grades for the past four years. MEC did observe that the private schools in these locations have enough textbooks. PEDs in Herat, Panjsher and Parwan told MEC that lack of textbooks is a big challenge. MEC heard reports of the books intended for MoE schools being sold to private schools, with some students claiming that they'd bought the MoE textbooks from the Bazaar. Notably, on the cover-page of MoE-issued textbooks, it is printed: *"The selling and buying of MoE textbooks is prohibited."* Interviewees also suggested that the textbooks be distributed to students *at the end* of educational year, so that students could continue their education and get additional preparation time during holiday months.

The EJSR visits to the provinces revealed serious shortcomings in the distribution of textbooks and in students' access to relevant textbooks. Provincial education authorities believe that the issue of shortage of textbooks originates from MoE in Kabul. They say if they receive the textbooks in their province then they don't have any problems in distributing them to schools. They say they have not received the number of textbooks they have requested from MoE and the ones they receive are distributed to the priority districts. The main challenge is that MoE that does not send the textbooks to provinces on time. For example, in 1393, it took two years for Herat province to receive a cargo of textbooks.

In Balkh, books are not available and students have to purchase old books from free markets which are printed by private sectors in black and white. In Badakhshan, textbook distribution is delayed for several months because there are challenges in sending the textbooks to districts due to e.g. transportation challenges like hard-to-pass roads – in some districts the road is open only three months a year. Another challenge is the procurement process that is lengthy and time

consuming (it is recommended that distribution of textbooks to be contracted with private sectors). In Kandahar Some schools meet their needs by communicating with other schools.

One of the biggest challenges, however, is that the textbooks that arrive in provinces are not based on needs; they often receive the wrong textbooks in terms of subject or language or the number. For example, in 1397, the textbooks that were sent to Herat were all in Pashto while they had requested more in Dari language. In Kandahar, shortage of textbooks is noticeable at all levels specially at primary and secondary levels. In some schools, old textbooks from 1381 are used that are dramatically different from the new ones. In other provinces, during the last several years, no textbooks were distributed and 70% of students don't have access to textbooks and the rest of the students share their textbooks with each other.

In other cases, students at the primary level use the old textbooks from 4 years ago that are in shabby condition. In most of cases, teachers have to write note from the textbooks on board to solve that shortage

Opinions vary as regards delegating textbooks distribution to the private sector. Some education authorities believe that if this happens, no serious supervision will be done and there is no guarantee that students receive their textbooks. Badakhshan education authorities, however, are positive about offering distribution of textbooks to the private sector. They argue that because MoE doesn't have enough budget and staff, the textbooks do not reach students on time. They, however, emphasize that the education directorate should be involved in the process as supervisors.

*Perceptions (of teachers, students, and experts) on new language curriculum for Gs 1-3 and their alignment with curriculum policy and framework.*

The introduction of a new language curriculum for grades 1-3 has largely been successful in terms of improving student learning and receiving positive reactions from those involved. The language books have improved the reading skills of students because they focus more on practice and repetition. Parents are also happy with the content and implementation of the ACR program.

In Herat, in general all interviewees were happy with the quality of the books developed by ACR and the programme has been useful for student learning. The students trained in ACR program comparing those students trained through traditional methods have demonstrated better reading improvement. Even those 2nd and 3rd grade students who had passed 1st grade based on the old curriculum and had problems in reading, have shown good progress based on the ACR curriculum.

In Laghman, ACR has distributed grades 1-3 textbooks and Teachers are trained on grades 1-3 language textbooks by ACR and there is no shortage of textbooks for these three levels

There are, however, a few operational problems with the new approach. Based on ACR curriculum, teachers need to use teaching aids in class but in many schools, it is hard to have access to the teaching aids. Overcrowded classes is another challenge to implementing the

reading program because the ACR textbooks are designed for standard classes. In addition, ACR textbooks are too much for a session of 35 minutes, which is not enough to cover each lesson

#### **EDUCATION GOVERNANCE: BUILDING PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER TRUST**

Build public and stakeholder trust on the educational system

In the wake of the devastating MVCA report on corruption in MOE, a key challenge has been to re-establish public trust in the education system. In order to mitigate the situation MOE has embarked on five different types of interventions: 1) a revised recruitment process managed by the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) 2) a radical transformation of the MOE to rationalize its organisational structure to better fit its mandate and functions; 3) an ambitious reform programme in order to increase effectiveness and efficiency of its services to the public; 4) a comprehensive and coherent public communication policy, and 5) a robust feed-back and complaints handling mechanism for service users and stakeholders.

*Review the recruitment process (through open competition and merit based)*

Effective and merit-based teacher recruitment is a critical tool for promoting teacher quality. However, in the past years, the merit-based recruitment of new teachers appears to have been significantly undermined by nepotism and corruption. Until 2018, teacher recruitment was managed and implemented at the provincial level. PEDs openly deviated from national civil service regulations, and the recruitment process appeared to be vulnerable to corruption at almost every step. Already in 2015, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) report stressed the vulnerabilities to corruption across all steps of the teacher recruitment process. (WB/TPS)

The 2017 report on *Ministry Wide Vulnerability to Corruption in the Ministry of Education* by the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) identified teacher appointment as the most serious vulnerability. It concerned the widespread, country-wide appointment of teachers on the basis of influence, or nepotism and bribery, not on the basis of merit. One immediate response was a revised recruitment process based on mass examinations managed by the Independent Commission (ICARCS).

Based on MEC recommendations and presidential decree, in 1396/2017 recruitment in grade (5-6) both teaching and non-teaching positions was transferred to CSC. The new recruitment process in these grades was based on a biometric system with the cooperation of MoHE in order to maintain transparency and accountability.

8000 teaching positions have been announced by CSC through website as well as the shortlisted candidates and exam results.

In order to ensure gender balance, mass examination procedure (term number 18th) allocated 5 concessionary and extra numbers to female candidates which is calculated in the final result.

1257 none teaching staff also have been recruited (80 %) male and (20) female.

Maintaining transparency and accountability, the recruitment process through mass examination is transparent in contrast to the previous practice.

The gender balance in teacher recruitment through mass examination is 26% at national level but in some province the percentage is lower.

Although 3 types of examination are mentioned in the mass examination procedure (mass examination, diverse professional and individual exams), in reality the recruitment of TTCs teachers and general education teachers have been taken a similar manner (e. g. for of TTCs teacher (75%) average scores are needed).

Following a presidential decree, the whole recruitment process of teachers was radically transformed and the main responsibility transferred to the Independent Civil Service Commission of Afghanistan. The recruitment process<sup>38</sup> is based on articles 2 and 7 of the civil servant policy, it is merit based and should be done by open competition. The candidates should comply with the following demands: Afghan nationality, age 18-64, in good health, have at least a grade 12 certificate, and not committed any crime. Based on the decree from President Ashraf Ghani, and for the purpose of a fair and merit-based process for civil servant recruitment, the process is decided to be based on open competition and it is implemented by MoE in cooperation with MoHE and MoF. Though the process has been effective in bringing transparency and in reducing corruption, it has faced challenges like delay in recruiting teachers for schools in different provinces and districts. Moreover, the reform and civil service commission developed a mass exam strategy in 2017 to recruit staff for grades 4-6. The process includes: announcement of all vacancies, registration of the candidates, distribution of recruitment forms, candidates biometric, shortlisting, giving the exam, ensuring open competition, doing a public awareness to promote the culture of accountability and encouraging qualified candidates especially female candidates to participate, setting up an oversight mechanism for civil society and media of the recruitment process.

Experience after one year with the new recruitment process shows the new recruitment process has demonstrated rule of law but it still has a number of shortcomings:

Lack of coordination between HR office and ICARCS. Some of the specific problems include a slow pace of the recruitment process and that lists of candidates of teachers who have passed the mass examinations reached the Education Directorate from MoE and ICARCS are not the same. In order

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<sup>38</sup> Source: MOE/DRS

to fill vacant positions, HR office has sent these vacancies to ICARCS for recruitment process but examination was administered without coordinating the Education Directorate.

The recruitment process through ICARCS has been effective in reducing corruption, it has prevented influential people and MPs' interferences and also stopped trading the positions. The process has improved girls' enrolment rate in the districts and rural areas.

The process, however, has not been able to recruit professional teachers who should know educational psychology, teaching method, and communication skills. Using multiple choice questions does not capture the teaching knowledge and skills of the candidates. Sometimes, through the mass examination incompetent and non-professional teachers and other staff are recruited

In one province, females were recruited through Women Empowerment Program as contract teachers. Though the positions had been originally planned for districts and remote rural areas, most of them were recruited for the centre of the province. Recruiting female teachers have had positive effect in the districts and rural areas in terms of encouraging more girls to continue their education and also parents willingly send their daughters to female schools with female teachers.

Mass exam is not responsive to the needs of each province in terms of the balance in distribution of positions at provincial levels. They have recruited female teachers for boys' schools and vice versa and the position codes for newly recruited teachers and non-teaching staff do not match the positions. Teachers have been recruited for wrong subject matters that was not their field of study contrary to the civil service policy

Civil Society and school Shuras are not involved in supervising the mass exam process. In principle, the school Shuras should be involved in supervising the recruitment process but in practice they hardly supervise the recruitment process. Supervision of the teacher recruitment process should be improved to secure transparency and to gain people's trust, school Shuras need to be involved in the recruitment process supervision. The Education directorate authorities while admitting that the role of school Shuras in creating transparency is important, their responsibilities need to be clearly defined so that they should not interfere with the Education Directorate affairs. They also recommend that as the number of school Shura members is large, only one representative from among them, with a good academic background, should be selected to supervise the process.

The following recommendations have been made on teacher recruitment:

In order to maintain merit-based recruitment it's suggested to establish joint committee which is mentioned in in term #5 of the mass examination procedure at enteral and provincial level. In order to speed up the recruitment process it's suggested that CSC should plan and organize mass examination separately to MoE vacant positions from other ministries and the exam should be taken at least twice per year.

To the mass examination process and ensure gender balance especially in rural areas the SMSs and CDCs should cooperate with CSC to attract and encourage female teaches to participate in the examination.

Preparing job descriptions (JDs) for the vacant positions and publication and distribution of the JDs during the announcement and application form at central and provincial level.

Candidates' educational documents and experience background should be checked by the recruitment joint committee composed from MoE and CSC authorized representatives.

Recruitment process of the lecturers (e.g. TTCs lecturers) should be taken based on mass examination procedure (special exam for professional positions) and based on lectures recruitment by law in which (75%) university score and presenting a seminar on related topic to the academic board should be considered in close coordination with the relevant department.

#### *Review the role of Civil Service Organizations (CSOs) and school Shuras (SMSs) in overseeing the recruitment process*

Based on term #5 clues#2 of the mass examination procedure the civil societies have the overseeing role, but in the practice they have not had the active monitoring from all steps of the recruitment process, except of the application form distribution and shortlisting.

There is no clarification regarding the civil societies' overseeing from all steps of the recruitment process, although more details are needed on the recruitment at each and single step.

The mass examination procedure and other related documents have not given an oversight role to SMSs in the recruitment process.

#### **Recommendations:**

In order to clarify the civil societies' oversight role regarding different steps of the recruitment process and to make them fully aware of their role and responsibilities it is necessary to develop a comprehensive guideline on the mass examination process.

In order to maintain transparency and accountability the mass examination procedure needs amendment and the SMSs roles and responsibilities should be included for attracting and motivating qualified candidates to participate in mass examination especially female teachers.

#### **MOE organizational restructuring and capacity building**

In response to the finding that MoE structure and capacity was not responsive for effective delivery of quality education services, MoE leadership has already shown concerted efforts to address the shortcomings.

Key to this is a Structural Efficiency Review (SER) that aims to review the existing structure of MoE and its functions. It will examine the functional mandate of departments and eliminate duty overlaps among offices. Once the functional review is completed, a comprehensive plan and

organogram will be designed for MoE to rationalize its structure to increase efficiency and effectiveness of its service delivery.

The Capacity Building for Results (CBR) programme will address the unsustainable dependence on donor-funded technical assistance (TA) which has been coupled at central and provincial levels with inefficient and capacity-draining “projectization”, duplication of effort and lack of clear agreement on outcomes.

Moreover, NESP III focuses on the provincial and district education departments and schools. Institutional reform, structure development and capacity building of MoE is critical for sustained delivery of quality services addressed in NESP III. Systematic strengthening of management and supervision systems to improve performance will be essential under NESP III arrangements. Development of provincial and district operational plans will gradually be linked with operational plans to strengthening the EMIS and MoHE systems to enable improved monitoring and evaluation, which will provide strategic inputs into planning and budget processes. Capacity weaknesses and lack of authority will be addressed and monitored under the Human Resource Development (HRD) strategies with links to the CBR program which has already begun to produce some results.

The Ministry of Education has started a review of its core mandates, the areas of overlap with other ministries and the possibility of passing some of the responsibilities to other stakeholders (other ministries, private sector, community councils, etc.). The objective of this strategy is to improve governance by focusing existing capacity on key core mandates and using alternatives for delivery of non-core functions.

The Ministry does not currently have the capacity for direct provision of all services, and needs to address priorities through partnerships, greater accountability to Afghan society and a focus on results, especially the preparation of Afghan youth for the labour market. As agreed with donor and Government partners in education service delivery, NESP III does not include tertiary education, which is the responsibility of MoHE. However, representatives from MoHE were involved in NESP III preparation and the interface between the two Ministries, in the area of teacher training for example, will be clarified further by MoU. Pre-service training will largely be the responsibility of MoHE under NESP III, with significant collaboration on areas of curriculum development, recruitment and deployment.

#### External TAs in MOE

The large number of externally financed TAs in MOE has been the subject of continued discussions. Currently, 1,163 individuals or 6.2% of MoE employees are funded by major programs and working as contracted staffs of World Bank, GPE, UNESCO, and UNICEF. Their specific numbers are: World Bank: 652 TAs; GPE: 482 TAs, of whom 279 are female teachers; UNESCO: 16 TAs; UNICEF: 40 TAs.,

Based on discussion with Development Projects and HR Directorate of MoE, a specific strategy to migrate the external TAs to the Tashkeel does not exist, and will need to be developed over the course of this CBRP. Some of these TAs are hired for specific projects with limited duration that there is no need to migrate them in Tashkeel positions, but for others there should be a plan. Few of the contracted staff hired to Tashkeel positions in a competitive process. The HR General Directorate is expected to make a plan to migrate TAs to Tashkeel. CBR is a good opportunity to allocate a number of positions for TAs to join the Tashkeel and reduce dependency to donors and external funds

Capacity enhancement: The Ministry of Education has implemented different capacity building programs that has improved the staff capacity at various levels but it is not satisfactory and more effective strategies, policies, and programs are needed to have capable education support staff at different levels. To this purpose, the Human Resource directorate has developed a strategy and plans for 2018-2019<sup>39</sup>. There is a need for accurate needs assessment to find out the organizational and individual capacity needs. The starting point is to enhance the human resource directorate so that they can do their jobs as expected (capacity building strategy and plan, p. 3). There are two goals explicitly mentioned in the capacity building strategy:

- Doing a baseline study regarding the existing skill in the general directorate and the provincial human resource officers and giving recommendations for learning plans.
- The analysis of the learning needs for the general directorate and provincial human resource officers and staff expected (capacity building strategy and plan, p. 3).

The preliminary findings from the different departments in the Human Resource General directorate indicate that there are areas to be enhanced. The learning indicators for 10 departments in the general directorate show that capacity enhancement has improved 16% which is the average capacity enhancement in the past 12 months. The findings at provincial levels<sup>40</sup> indicate that the human resource offices in the five provinces under study has improved 6%.

USAID's capacity improvement project is another opportunity for capacity building of MoE staff. The main purposes of the project are:

- Improving the systems and working regulations that lead to better education service delivery
- Increasing the transparency and accountability of national and sub-national systems in the Ministry of Education.

The specific objectives for the USAID's 5-year capacity building project (CBA) are: EMIS, teacher recruitment system, salary payment system, internal inspection system, and resource, allocation

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<sup>39</sup> (MOE/DRS)

<sup>40</sup> Mini Field Visits to Balkh, Kandahar, Badghis, Bamyan, Paktia



and implementation plan. Other objectives of the project are building the capacity for civil society institutes so that they can deliver education service at provincial and district levels. The challenges that capacity building programs are facing are: insufficient budget, not clear how the programs can meet the Ministry of Finance needs.

#### A comprehensive and coherent public communication policy

Recently, MoE has applied four different tools for dissemination of information regarding the services it provides to the citizens. The common tools are<sup>41</sup>:

1. MoE website and social page: the website and social page of MoE get update in daily bases. All the policy, strategic plans, operational plans, guidelines, laws and other information are available in MoE website.
2. Email: currently there are more than 1,000 emails from reporters and journalists that MoE share the reports, news, announcements and other information.
3. MoE Magazine: MoE has a magazine which is published in weekly bases. It includes the achievements of MoE as well as other information regarding MoE.
4. MoE TV: The Ministry of Education has its own TV which broadcasting the information, reports, discussion and other related issue to education. It also broadcasting the services that MoE provides to citizens.

#### A feed-back and complaints handling mechanism for service users and stakeholders

Currently, there are three ways that Afghan citizens can share their feedbacks and complaints regarding services of MoE.

- Complaints boxes in all MoE departments and entities.
- Direct communication to Directorate of Internal Audit and Directorate of Publication
- Short Code: the short code of MoE is 455 that citizen can share their feedbacks with MoE management board.

#### *Integration and automation of systems to ensure accountability:*

Ministry of Education in the past several years, has developed different information management systems to enhance activities related to data management, systems like HRMIS, TVETMIS, EMIS, and TMIS. HR-MIS (structure system and personal records keeping system) EMIS and Payroll systems are the main systems, but currently, however, each program and directorate use them based on their requirements. So far, 209000 personal data have been registered in the personal

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<sup>41</sup> Based on CBRP: 24

records keeping system, but the MoE data systems for Tashkeel and payroll are not coordinated with each other.

In order to tackle challenges like duplication and redundancy of data, waste of time and inaccurate reports, the Ministry of Education is planning to develop a comprehensive data system called Human Resource, Payroll Management Information System (HP-MIS). So that it can save and process the data of salary payment and tackle the problem of ghost teachers. The system will be linked to the provinces, districts and even (to the extent possible) to schools to collect reliable data. The challenges, however, about HP-MIS are as follows:

- It is not currently capable of covering the whole HRMIS, so both systems need to be maintained separately,
- There are no guidelines for using and maintaining the HP-MIS
- It is very hard for newly recruited staff to understand the system and work with it,
- The system can only accept the key reports of M40, M41, and school level reports and there is no option for entering other reports except the ones mentioned above (CBA, p. 6).

The recommendations by the CBA report are: The system needs to be improved or redesigned to accommodate the needs of the ministry, it should be designed in a way to respond to the HR system needs, a comprehensive reporting system should be designed to produce different reports on staff salary, and the coding system to be created in a way to keep the data more reliably.

Currently an ongoing project supports the improvements of HR Tashkeel and an efficient structure establishment to ministry of education. The structure efficiency review (SER) project reviews the current structure of MoE and propose the new structure on the basis of the mandate of MoE. On the basis of the findings, the MoE SER project envisages a revised organizational structure at national and subnational level for grades 1-3 positions. A proposal is being developed as well for grades 4 and 5 positions in MoE Tashkeel. (CBRPp27)

The Education Management Information System (EMIS) is progressively expanding at national and sub-national levels and supports evidence-based decision making in planning, resource allocation and monitoring of education service delivery and results. EMIS has so far captured largely quantitative data and plans are in place to collect, process and disseminate data on quality and results.

The EMIS system assessment has been done by CAB and an analytical report has been prepared. A concept note on HP-MIS development has been drafted by MoE. The main challenges are: No comprehensive assessment regarding the MoE main MIS in order to identify the business process and the linkage among the related units and how it will work automatically and generate the required reports.

No online connection of the MISs between centre PEDs, DEDs and school levels.

No consideration of the related departments including CBA project for integration of the systems and HP-MIS development.

No distinction between the role and responsibilities of MoE departments regarding data collection and data entry. Many departments are collecting the same data in different ways which has caused and leads to misuse of resources and departments giving different figures regarding MoE learning centres and employees, both teaching and non-teaching staff. Lack of technical staff in HR systems development unit and lack of technical and professional learning opportunities for the current employees in order to build their capacities.

The following recommendations have been made:

Connecting MISs between central, provincial, district and school levels with the cooperation of Ministry of Telecommunication.

In order to ensure data accuracy and to utilize the resources effectively, it's necessary to differentiate the role and responsibilities of the MoE departments regarding data collection, storing and information dissemination.

In order to build the capacity of the system developers in HR and to utilize these systems properly, the review suggests to conduct technical trainings at central and provincial level. Also, it is necessary to hire professionals through official tashkeel positions or contract professionals based at the projects.

Currently, Ministry of Education has two different types of MIS in HR directorate. The first one HRMIS which is processing and recording the personal information of employees, promotion, demotion and retirement. The central server located in HR Directorate. The second type of MIS is SDMIS (Structure Development Management Information System). It records and processes the information related to structure of Ministry of Education including the code number of positions and the records of the employees which are holding those positions. This system also includes all the information regarding the teacher and schools at districts, provincial and central level. The servers needed to be installed in each province but due to some limitation, currently just 7 provinces are under the coverage of this system and hope to expand it to all the provinces of Afghanistan.

While these types of systems are essential and important to MoE, the two systems need to be further developed and expanded to cover all the data on MoE staffs. As agreed with CBR TAs will be provided to Ministry of Education to assist the Human Resources General Directorate in developing and establishing a comprehensive HR system (HRMIS), this HRMIS will be part of ERP interface, CBR will provide TAs to review, develop and design the documentation, SoPs, business process mapping of MoE, HRMIS domain. The HR general directorate is establishing a Unit for HRMIS. This system will comprise Tashkeel, Payroll, Recruitment, Restructuring, Performances Appraisal and Performances Management System models. The TAs will provide trainings to the staffs. Equipment and other infrastructures will be budgeted in the FY1397. As well as, CBR should recruit HR experts to provincial and central HR Managers Tashkeel Positions. In the beginning

experts would review, structure and introduce the skeleton of the system and software for the development.

*Review the feasibility of the automation of relevant MoE process (HR-MIS, EMIS, Payroll), and Review the progress and barriers of a comprehensive HR-MIS to be developed*

Current status:

A MoU has signed between CSC and MoE for development of (HRMIS)

A unit in HRD has been established with the cooperation of CSC to enter the Mo employees' personal data which is a necessary step for (HRMIS) development.

Recommendation:

Establishment of a technical committee from CSC and HRD members in order to force the coordination and speed up the HRMIS system development process

Conducting of comprehensive assessment of the GD- HR work process by the technical joint committee formed from CSC and HRD.

While progress on integration varies between provinces, the challenges they face, however, are somewhat similar:

- While the information systems for Tashkeel, registration, and EMIS are generally functioning, no action has been taken so far on the integration of HR-MIS, Tashkeel, and Payroll into HP-MIS.
- Although the CBA office is in the education directorate and one of their responsibilities is to make analyses of the business process and integration of information systems, so far, no analysis has been done in this regard to simplify the business process. There is lack of coordination among CBA and relevant offices (human resource, finance, and budget) to determine the needs of the relevant offices and developing a unified and comprehensive data management system.
- There is no technical staff to make the best use of HR-MIS and EMIS for effective planning and reporting.
- There is no recruitment of professional staff for management and making effective use of data system,
- There is no automatic sharing of data on expected system functions in a hierarchical order,
- Finance office has no access to edit and reform data in the system.
- Lack of interest of the CSD and lack coordination between CSC and HRD for development of a comprehensive (HRMIS) development.
- No inclusive assessment has been done of the GD-HR work process in order to comprehensive (HRMIS) to be fully responsive for HRD requirements.

#### ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY TO CORRUPTION PRACTICES

*Identify areas susceptible to corruption at provincial and district levels. update on implementation of anti-corruption strategies and an action plan. ensure the role and functionality of anti-corruption committees. review the status of database developed to keep the records of audit/inspection cases for follow-up*

#### CORRUPTION

In 2017 a devastating report from the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) on *Ministry Wide Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment of the Ministry of Education* attracted wide spread attention in Afghanistan and internationally. The assessment pointed to 36 different types of corruption within the education sector, highlighting that corruption had become endemic in the last 10 to 15 years and that malpractice was systemic within the ministry. The MEC report also stated that it was clear from the interviews that corruption has been taking place consistently and on a large scale, going back many years.

MEC identified systematic practices of corruption within the ministry that ranged from school-level issues, such as bribes to modify school certificates, through to ministry-level issues such as corruption in school construction and in textbook distribution. Put simply, the report suggests that the entire education sector is either corrupt or vulnerable to corruption.

Teacher appointment emerged as being the most serious vulnerability, the widespread, country-wide appointment of teachers on the basis of influence, or nepotism and bribery, not on the basis of merit. Thus, the heart of the corruption problems at MoE is not primarily issues like procurement corruption or ghost teachers. Rather, it is a dysfunctional education system that directly fails the citizens it is mandated to educate at the point of delivery. As a consequence, communities have comprehensively lost faith in the system.

The MEC acknowledges that such a large, complex Ministry will always be vulnerable to high levels of corruption. The Ministry is the largest public employer in the country, employing some 262,000 people, or 68 percent of government employment. As such, it inevitably becomes a prime target for those wishing to find positions for friends, relatives, colleagues and the children of colleagues. And it has long been unable to resist this pressure.

The report states that there appear to be very few reform-minded officials who are either willing or able to bring reforms within MoE. In addition, there are extreme levels of nepotistic influence. “Unless this influence is shut down, or dramatically constrained, it is difficult to see how there will be any improvement in the corruption vulnerability of teachers’ appointments.”

The large-scale appointment of unqualified teachers systematically prevents qualified teacher graduates from getting hired into schools. The extreme disconnect between new graduates and teaching places is likely due, in large part, to corruption. Some 75 percent of the graduates of the Teacher Training Colleges are unable to get work as teachers.

The school curriculum is too large, leading to corruption vulnerabilities as teachers try to get ill-prepared students through the Kankor exam. Textbooks that are meant to be free in public schools are mostly not available in schools but can often be bought at the market, in particular in urban centres.

Inspection, audit and oversight systems are ineffective or lacking.

Reliability of EMIS data. MEC compared school enrolment data and attendance data using the schools that it visited. EMIS data very closely matched enrolment data for the years 1392 to 1395 within two percent. However, when actual attendance data was compared with EMIS data, EMIS data over-estimated actual attendance by 23 percent on average. While this figure may not be generalizable due to the modest sample size, it indicates large remaining corruption vulnerability.

MEC recommended that MOE leadership issue a public statement which highlights sector-wide reform and the Ministry's fight against corruption, which is now considered fully implemented. MOE has also made substantial progress with revision of policies, documents and regulations. For instance, a Code of Conduct for all MOE staff to ensure Equity, Integrity, Right to Education, Accountability, and Trust is in place now. Community Based Education Policy and the Data Collection Guideline have been revised and the Education Quality Committee is functioning now.

The government of Afghanistan and subsequently the Ministry of Education are committed to fight against corruption. In December 2017, the government started the implementation of the national strategy combatting corruption. The strategy is divided in five sections:

- Political leadership and supporting the reformists
- Elimination of corruption in all offices and security sectors
- Institutionalization of civil servant system based on merits
- Persecution of those accused of corruption
- Sound financial and budget management.

The Ministry of Education based on the national strategy of combatting the corruption has developed an action plan and established a committee for implementation of the action plan. The action plan for FY2018 is developed in light of the corruption strategy and the directive from the President.

*Identifying areas susceptible to corruption at provincial and district levels*

According to the MEC report, the internal Audit directorate has identified the areas susceptible to corruption that are staff recruitment, school management, printing and distribution of textbooks , construction projects contracts, education management information system and staff salaries MEC Committee has recommended 113 recommendations to MoE for burning the necessary reform within the related fields.

Based on the MEC recommendations the internal audit has prepped annual work plan of has prepared in 1397 & 1398 with consideration of work priority.

An anti-corruption action plan has been prepared in 1396 based on national ant-corruption strategy in 1397 with consideration of MEC recommendations, SIGAR inspection report, EQUIP program assessment and education joint sector review reports.

Anti-corruption committee has been established at centre level and leading by DM Admin and Finance the committee consists representatives from central directorates of MoE including internal audit.

The committee of internal inspection independence the minister is head of that and the issues which are higher than internal inspection directorate employees' ability will review and solve the problem by mentioned committee.

Implementation of collective exam process by usage of biometric system and Kankor has started with cooperation of administrative reforms commission and ministry of higher education.

Prevention of embezzlement of 1.5 million Afs from hire of 12 graduates as bachelor in many districts in Herat province and return of that amount to government budget before staff salary payment by internal Audit directorate.

Lack of tashkeel in internal Audit directorate at central and provinces level and lack of technical and vocational members for review of financial and budgetary issues.

There is low professional capacity of the provincial internal inspection units for review of financial and budget issues.

The vulnerable areas for corruptions are identified as: teacher recruitment, school management, teacher training colleges, curriculum and textbooks, provincial and district management, data management, academic supervision and inspection, procurement, and salary and archive system. More specifically, examples include: in finance, expenditure from one code in another one, leadership misusing the goods and cash dispensers, and misusing from teacher salary, paying salary from one single code to more than one person. In literacy, ghost courses were identified in some districts. In Human Resources, illegal recruitment of one person for another in the schools, and recruiting haqulzahma teachers specially in general and Islamic education programs. In schools, a large number of students forged certificates.

The Anti-corruption committee has monthly meetings to discuss and find solutions for corruption issues. The following challenges still need to be addressed:

- There is no anti-corruption committee at provincial level

- There is no information system to record cases and then connect it to higher levels of inspection
- The action plans are not shared with provincial offices or there has been no workshop in this regard,
- The internal inspection has no mechanism to prevent corruption,
- There is no database in the inspection directorate to register or follow up on the cases; all cases are recorded in hard copies but no results are recorded. There is no coordination among inspection office and attorney general office.
- There is no awareness campaign to prevent corruption and inform that it is religiously forbidden,
- The results of corruption cases are not shared with the public to build their trust,
- The process of eliminating corruption in the Ministry is retraced and time-consuming
- Internal inspection is not independent in carrying out their responsibilities. They can't supervise directly the recruitment process of haqulzahma teachers and procurement process.
- The Audit officer is not allowed to inspect and audit the important finance and procurement sections without permission from the education directorate. The Audit office annually perform two kinds of inspection: pre-planned inspection, and special case inspection. Very often both special cases and ordinary cases as the result of pre-planned inspections have been submitted to the Attorney General (AG) for further follow-up, but the AG doesn't allow the audit office to follow up the cases. The internal audit's role in campaigning the corruption is effective on common people only, but not on the politically influential people.

## Recommendations

Although the representative committee of relevant organizations has activities in the ministry of education to work against administrative corruption, some of the departments do not follow up seriously on the cases and do not present their reports to the committee at the specific time from the implementation progress of recommendations. Therefore, the committee members have to follow cases up seriously and be aware of the implementation progress of recommendations.

Increase number of posts of professional members in the internal inspection directorate based on their duties, both at centre and province level.

Independence of provincial internal inspection units based on terms of reference for inspection cases.

Providing vocational and professional program for capacity building based on employees' needs and according to education need assessment results in terms of inspection of budgetary and financial issues.

Review the implementation of MoE anti-corruption strategy and action plan

A committee against corruption has been created by the leadership of MoE at central level and it holds monthly and quarterly sessions and has prepared 3 work reports.



In general, implementation of MEC recommendations, from all recommendations, 16 recommendations 100%, 16 recommendations 50%, 15 recommendations 25% and work has started over 38 recommendations and 22 recommendations are suspense with the reason of lack of budget and being long term.

With the number of 293 files has reviewed and solved in terms of financial and procurement.

52 cases has referred to general prosecuting for investigation.

172 imperative cases are in different parts of administrative and financial.

An amount of 14981217 Afs. have been returned to the government account.

Absence of action plans for counter committees against administrative corruption at province and district level

Lack of general attorney cooperation and coordination for the identified cases from internal inspection directorate of MoE and resending files for review to internal inspection department.

#### Recommendations:

Department of planning and evaluation has prepared an action plan against administrative corruption and should send this action plan with the coordination of internal inspection directorate to provinces and districts education directorates and units.

In order to strengthen a sense of necessary cooperation, a supervisory unit should be created in internal inspection directorate to review and solve the problem correctly.

Preparation of special procedures jointly by general attorney and directorate of internal inspection in order to identify the responsibilities of internal inspection directorate of MoE and general attorney for cases to review and after completion of inspection steps by internal inspection delivered cases to general attorney for completion.

*Review the role and functionality of anti-corruption committee(s) at national and sub-national levels and Review of progress in developing a system for record keeping for audit cases for follow-up and further process*

According to MEC committee recommendations, MoE has created a committee against administrative corruption at centre level of ministry of education and it holds regular quarterly sessions and supervise for better implementation of MEC recommendations.

An action plan against administrative corruption has been prepared by the committee against administrative corruption at MoE central departments level according to national strategy against administrative corruption and with coordination of relevant departments and directorates.

Supervision from implementation of MEC committee recommendations and up to now 3 work reports regarding encounter against corruption quarterly prepared and sent to relevant offices.

An independent committee of internal inspection has been created to address issues at a higher level than the authority of the internal inspection directorate.

ToR, procedure, charter of internal inspection has been created and developed.

Right now, the committee against corruption has been created at provinces level.

Some members of the committee against administrative corruption do not participate regularly in the sessions. This causes interruptions to the proceedings of the committee against corruption.

Recommendation:

Creating of committees against corruption at provincial education directorate level for better implementation of action plans against corruption at different levels.

Serious follow up on committee against corruption members emphasising their duty to participate in sessions and providing reasons of regular nonparticipating and presenting appropriate solutions to the problem.

*THE SITUATION OF 50% OF SCHOOLS WITH NO BUILDINGS (I.E. 6000 SCHOOLS)*

*Review the status of funding and capacity for construction of 6000 schools in the next three years.*

*Review the policy and guidelines – if any - for maintenance of schools. Explore the division of responsibility among stakeholders in terms of construction, quality assurance, and handover of school buildings.*

Approximately half of all schools in Afghanistan are still without proper of school buildings, and a significant number of students are facing problems because of this.<sup>42</sup> The majority of centres without buildings are in primary education, literacy and Islamic education, but the surprisingly high percentage in TE is not only due to the more informal teacher support centres, also 58% of regular TTCs are without proper building.

Based on presidential decree the school construction responsibility shifted to MRRD and MoUDH. The MoE construct 6000 schools in the next 3 years at national level.

The MoE has prepared an infrastructure plan for the total of 2647 schools (1946 new buildings and 701 missing components) in 17 provinces and its total budget is 175 Million USD, but for the remaining number of schools, there is no budget for construction.

MoRRD and MoUD in partnership with the Ministry of Education should build 6000 schools in rural and urban areas within the next two years (1397-1398). MoE was supposed to identify the locations where schools should be built, but according to MoRRD, this identification has not yet been completed – MoE has identified only 2,700 locations for building schools (which requires a budget of USD 175 million). CDCs have a key role in implementation of these projects through CCNPP. Currently, it is estimated that there are roughly 36,000 CDCs across the country.

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<sup>42</sup> MOE/DRS

Table 6. School construction plan for the next three years					
School Types	No of new buildings	Missing components	Total # of schools	Year	Budget (USD)
Female secondary	76	Latrine, drinking water, boundary walls for 701 schools	1946 new buildings + 701 missing components	2019	75,000,000
Mixed secondary	142			2020	75,000,000
Female primary	990			2021	25,000,000
Male primary	738				
Total	<b>1,946</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>2,647</b>	<b>G. Total</b>	<b>175,000,000</b>

From the total 1946 schools that will be constructed only for 300 schools the land has been found and specified, but still for 423 schools there is no land for constructing school building.

While good technical capacities exist in MoE ISD, coordination between MoE and MRRD however, and especially between MOE and MoUDH, is weak

Table 7. Schools building status

Schools Building Status					
Level	Numbers			Percentage	
	With Buildings	Without Buildings	Total	With Buildings	Without Buildings
National Level	8289	7999	16288	51%	49%
General Education	7876	7012	14888	53%	47%
Islamic Education	323	745	1068	30%	70%
Teacher Education	76	192	268	28%	72%
Literacy Schools	14	50	64	22%	78%

Source: EMIS 2018

The following problems have been identified:

Interruption of influential people (e. g. members of parliament) regarding the approval of construction projects based on their choices, but without considering MoE norms and standards.

Constructions projects are sub-contracted by awarded companies which has caused low quality and incompleteness of the projects based on the contracts.

Lack of facilities for engineering teams in order to do regular monitoring to ensure the projects quality.

Recommendations:

A budget should be allocated for construction projects based on MoE norms and standards at national level.

The SMSs with cooperation of CDS and local governance should find suitable land for construction of 423 schools at provincial level.

In order to maintain equality and transparency the review suggests to allocate a budget based on the MoE policy and standards. MoE in close cooperation and coordination with MoF should prevent influential people (e.g. MPs) from approving construction projects without considering the MoE policy, and norms.

The directorates of procurement, ISD and internal Audit should regularly monitor the construction projects in order to ensure quality of the constructions projects and that they are completed based on contracts.

The ISD and PEDs should provide necessary facilities for engineering teams in order to perform regular monitoring of the construction projects to ensure quality assurance and on time completion of the projects based on contracts at central and provincial level.

In order to maintain security of construction projects it is necessary to give a monitoring role and responsibility to SMSs, share the projects contracts details with SMSs and CSOs and assign local labourers which will ensure on time completion of construction projects.

*Review the financial and technical capacity for maintenance and repairing of schools and roles and responsibility of relevant stakeholders in quality assurance of construction projects*

Budget for learning centres maintenance and repair is insufficient and due to this many schools that need repair are delayed from one year to another, which increases the work volume as well. 52 learning centres repair projects are not contracted due to insecurity in some parts of the country.

For maintenance and repair of the learning centres good technical capacities exist at central and provincial level.

A new procedure regarding learning centre maintenance and repair has been developed in 2018, but there are no specific norms regarding estimation of repairing work.

#### Recommendations:

The ISD including relevant stakeholders should ensure quality of construction projects through regular monitoring in order to complete projects according to contracts.

Providing technical training to SMSs by the ISD in order to build their capacity to perform active and regular supervision of the construction projects.

In order to specify the monitoring roles and responsibilities of CSOs for the construction projects there is need to develop a comprehensive guideline by the ISD.

In order to build public trust and maintain transparency and accountability the review suggests sharing the details of construction contracts, including project expenditure, with CSOs and SMSs.

## KEY RECOMMENDATION

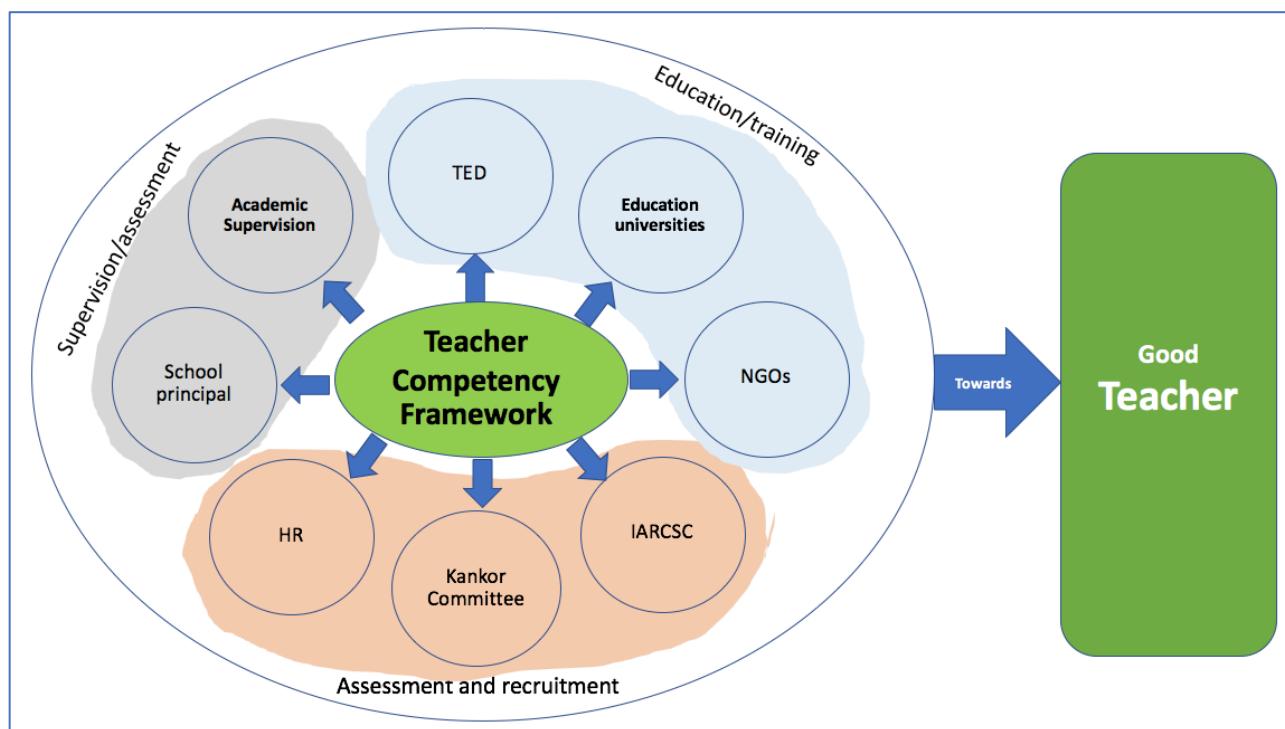
Since 1380/2001 Afghanistan has witnessed a number of educational reforms, most of which, however, have rarely yielded the expected results. The main reasons that other past reforms were not overly successful, according to the CBRP, are, among others, lack of appropriate coordination.

In the Education Reform it is recommended “The required human resources will be recruited, oriented, supported and promoted in an effective and transparent process and in coordination with the relevant institutions” (Education Reform, 2017, p. 25). Therefore, it proposes a policy to establish and continue effective, accelerated and continuous coordination and communication with both internal and external stakeholders.

Education reform (MoE, 2017, p. 31) emphasise coordination in developing and implementing all programs to achieve the education objectives.

Through analysis of the collected data and information from the desk review and from the field visits based on the three components of access, quality and management, the key challenge identified was lack of coordination in teacher management. More specifically, there is not due coordination among different key stakeholders that manage teacher education, recruitment, allocation, assessment, and promotion.

Coordination (both vertical and lateral) among stakeholders based on specific criteria – i.e. teacher competency framework - is the first step towards having competent teachers in class. The key stakeholders in teacher education and management are those that are responsible for teacher education, supervision, assessment and recruitment (see the picture below).



Source: MoE/R&EU (2019)

### Steps to be taken to improve coordination

- Identifying the relevant key stakeholders discussed above (e.g. TED) who decide and take action about teaching forces
- Reforming the stakeholder policy so that it directly addresses the teacher competency framework (TCF)
- Stakeholder orientation of the TCF by holding meetings/workshops/training
- Wide dissemination of the TCF document through MoE website/Facebook
- 40% of questions for teacher recruitment examination should relate to the teacher competency framework
- Piloting the process for a year following an assessment of the process
- Next steps to be decided based on the results of the piloting process

### Long Term Outcomes of the Key Recommendation

Once the key recommendation is implemented, it will have the following outcomes:

- Teachers are clear on how school principals and supervisors expect them to teach and behave in class (i.e. based on the TCF, not on their tastes);
- All teacher candidates sitting for recruitment examination will know that 40% of questions are related to the TCF, so they get prepared for that;
- The candidates who pass the recruitment exam would already know about TCF, so their training on pedagogy and TCF would be easier and more effective.
- In a nutshell, teachers are recruited, allocated, assessed and promoted based on TCF

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## 8 EJSR ANNEX

### Results Framework:

#### Access

##### General education

Progress against the 1397 operational objectives in access was good as regards increasing the number of new entrants (79% relative to target), and in constructing science centres (90%). Less satisfactory, however, were results in establishing new schools and upgrading primary schools to secondary, and secondary to high schools, which were only around 25% or less. Performance was only slightly better where MOE wanted to establish attached classes (36%).

ACCESS	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of new entrants	980,301	951,762	97% Including 40% female
No of new established schools	549	143	26%
No of primary schools upgraded to secondary	421	58	14%
No of Secondary schools upgraded to high schools	292	69	24%
No of attached classes established	4,787	1,722	36%
No of science centres constructed	10	9	90%

Source: operational plan, 1397

EMIS reports with statistics for disability, IDPs and ethnicity are not available.

##### Islamic education

The operational access targets for Islamic Education focused on increasing enrolment, and food and accommodation beneficiaries, where good progress was achieved in the number of male students, but less so for female students. Progress in the establishment of new institutions, and on construction of buildings and dormitories was less satisfactory: 22% -50%.

ACCESS	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of Madrasa newly established	75	34	45%
No of Darul Hefaz newly established	14	7	50%
No of Darul Ullum newly established	14	3	21%
No of male students newly enrolled in Madrasa	23,009	17,726	77%
No of female students newly enrolled in Madrasa	7,730	8,973	116%
No of male students newly enrolled in Darul Ullum	8,991	4,088	45%

No of female students newly enrolled in Darul Ullum	3,711	1,935	52%
No of male students newly enrolled in Darul Hefaz	6,507	4,896	75%
No of female students newly enrolled in Darul Hefaz	2,686	3,433	128%
No of building constructed	9	2	22%
No of dormitories constructed	4	2	50%
No of male and female students benefited from foods and accommodation	12,816	12,208	95%

#### Teacher training

Performance in the number of teachers trained in INSET (M44%, F17%) and the number of private TTC 14% was poor.

ACCESS	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of male teachers trained in in-service teaching program	6,038	2644	44%
No of female teachers trained in in-service teaching program	5,179	892	17%
No of private registered teacher training centres	29	4	14%

#### Technical and vocational education

The TVET structure is being reviewed. During the first quarter of monitoring there had been good progress on a functional review of TVET's management and program structure. The NUG leadership decided to make TVET an Independent Technical & Vocational Education and Training Board. IARCSC has been assigned to develop the concept of a new TVET structure. The Ministry of Finance will consider the new budget for the next year. Currently, TVET is using funds from a MoE 1397 approved budget.

TVET is now developing provincial profiles to determine which provinces have the capacity and potential to support particular vocations/professions to respond to market demands. So far, a pilot profile has been made in Baghlan province. TVET is going to develop such provincial profiles for all provinces. Once the provincial profiles are developed, TVET will develop an overall strategic plan.

The TVET access targets were achieved one third or less. They focused on enrolment, entrants in teacher-student courses, number of vocational courses and beneficiaries from food and accommodation facilities.

ACCESS	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of male and female students enrolled in 10 <sup>th</sup> grade	19,995	3,191	16%
No of new male and female entrants in teacher-student courses	1,505	682	45%
No of vocational courses established	48	39	81%
No of male and female students benefited from the subsistence and food facilities	11,482	9,262	81%

#### Literacy program

The number of literacy learners has been almost stagnant, between 18 – 21.000, during four years and it is insignificant in relation to needs and despite explicit political attention to the importance of increasing its coverage. The number of female learners went down in 1396.

Performance in literacy was 69% (57% F) in enrolment, number of literacy courses 83% and 43% beneficiaries from vocational education. This performance may not look particularly bad in itself, but the target numbers relative to need appear to be extremely low.

ACCESS	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of male and female students enrolled	502,047	196,854	39% (47%) female students
No of literacy courses established	20,066	11,491	57%
No of students benefited from vocational education	42,244	19,850	47%

## Quality

#### General education

In quality, the targets for development and distribution of math kits and labs tables were satisfactorily achieved between 79%-100% extent, while academic training of experts was achieved to 62 %, and training of teachers only achieved 17% of target.

QUALITY	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments

# of math kits developed and distributed for GE schools	1,750	1,210	69%
# of labs tables distributed for GE schools	1,818	1,350	74%
No of provided tables and chairs for labs	183,423	20,636	11%
# of Laboratory Technicians trained	2,714	153	6%
# of teachers trained	6,520	1,092	17%
# of schools equipped with science labs	500	40	8%
# of labs equipped	1	1	100%
Number of experts, officers and academic supervision members trained on central and provincial level	874	545	62%

#### Islamic education

Good quality progress was achieved in the development and distribution of math kits (92%) and the number of trained teachers (56%) and supervisors (294%). Other quality targets in IE were less satisfactory: provision of textbooks (10%) and computer labs (12%).

QUALITY	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of trained supervisors	68	200	294%
No of trained teacher	627	200	32%
No of trained teachers (on development professional opportunities)	1,000	556	56%
No of modified, printed and distributed Islamic education textbooks including teacher guides	653,496	268,000	41%
No of Islamic schools/Madrasas equipped with the computer labs	81	10	12%
# of math kits developed and distributed for IE centres	72	65	90%

## Teacher training

Performance in quality TE targets in textbooks, teacher assessment and training was very poor: 1% -10%.

QUALITY	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
Number of printed and distributed textbooks	276,106	50,700	18%
Number of general & Islamic education teachers to be assessed	25,000	244	1%
No of trained teachers	2512	85	3%
No of male and female pre-service students benefited from (foods/accommodation) facilities	10,679	6,009	56% Including 2,395 female teachers (40%)

## Technical and vocational education

The TVET quality targets were achieved to a considerable degree ranging from 67% - 130%. They focused on equipment of schools, on number and standards for curriculum development, assessment, teachers trained as well textbooks and teacher guides distributed.

QUALITY	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of schools and institutes to be equipped	12	12	100%
No of education curriculum framework developed (according to new standards)	15	10	67%
Percentage of teachers' capacity assessment standards developed	50%	65%	130%
No of trained teachers	558	952	171%
No of distributed textbooks	462,910	263,522	57% of 462,910 printed TB distributed to 296 schools/institutes
No of distributed teacher guide books	8,379	10,000	119%

## Literacy program

Literacy quality targets were concerned with academic training of teachers (49% achieved), number of textbooks for literacy and vocational courses (only 14 %) as well as progress in curriculum and textbook development (100%):

QUALITY	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of teachers trained in teaching methods and thematic knowledge annually	3,600	3,985	111% Including 960 female teachers (54%)
No of printed and distributed textbooks for literacy and vocational courses including teacher guide sets	490,947	69,311	14%
percentage of literacy curriculum framework and textbooks developed for 1 and 2 periods	100%	60%	60% first period completed and second period is in progress

## Governance

### General education

The operational targets in the governance field in school supervision and recruitment of contract teachers were almost fully achieved, while establishment of school councils (24%) and school improvement plans (31%) was less satisfactory.

GOVERNANCE/ MANAGEMENT	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of schools supervised	16,539	15,849	96%
No of contract-based teachers recruited	3,000	3,000	100%
No of new administrative school councils established	119	28	24%
No of School Improvement Plans provided	118	37	31%

#### Islamic education

Governance targets in IE (recruitment of teachers) were achieved: 600 are in the process of being recruited of a target of 600.

#### Teacher training

The TE governance targets concerned with recruitment of teachers were achieved 82% but not in monitoring of training centres:

GOVERNANCE/ MANAGEMENT	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of TTC faculties recruited	350	308	88%
No of teachers training centres monitored	234	5	2%

#### Technical and vocational education

The TVET governance targets concerned with recruitment of teachers were achieved, but only 21% on monitoring of schools and institutes.

GOVERNANCE/ MANAGEMENT	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of teacher recruited	204	201	99%
No of TVET schools and institutes monitored	163	280	172%

#### Literacy program

Literacy governance targets concerned with supervision of courses were achieved 62% but no contract teachers were recruited:

GOVERNANCE/ MANAGEMENT	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of course supervised	26,926	19,292	72%
No of contract-base teachers recruited	2,279	0	0%

#### Educational governance

There has been considerable progress within the operational targets for educational governance. They focused on the development of district operational plans, on MOUs. In addition, it focused on staff training and recruitment, and on MOE organizational restructuring. Little progress, however, in the development of provincial plans (7%)<sup>b</sup> and on the amount of land donated for teachers' townships (9%).

GOVERNANCE/ MANAGEMENT	Target	Achievement	Achievement in % and comments
No of provincial plans developed	458	181	40%
No of districts provided with school construction plans	423	335	79%
No of memorandum reviewed and provided	114	105	92%
The area of land provided for Teachers' Township (in acre)	56,196	1496	3%
No of schools collected their data	18,073	18,073	100%
No of trained staff	50	50	100%
No of training workshops conducted	1 workshop	0	0%
No of subjects supervised and reviewed	128	128	100%
No of statistic questionnaire reviewed	5	5	100%
Work on MoE organization structure (in all programs)	100%	100%	100%
No of staff recruited in key positions	30	34	113%