

University Presidents and Deans Conference Report



Afghanistan Higher
Education Project

Ministry of Higher Education and Higher Education Project

Conference Agenda

May 12, 2008

Kabul, MoHE Conference Hall

Morning Session

- 8:30 – 8:40 **Recitation of the Holy Qur'an & Translation**
- 8:40 - 9:10 **Moving Towards Quality and Accountability:
MoHE's Plans for Standards and Accreditation**
(Deputy Minister Babury)
- 9:10 - 9:30 **HEP's Accomplishments and Its Vision for the
Future**
(Richard Waugh, COP-HEP)
- 9:30 - 10:00 **Importance of National Standards as the First Step
Towards National Accreditation**
(Dr. Zaher Wahab, HEP)
- 10:00 - 10:15 **Tea Break**
- 10:15 – 11:00 **Standards for Teacher Education in Afghanistan's
Institutions of Higher Education**
(Omar Qargha, HEP)
- 11:00 – 11:30 **Question and Answer Session**
(Panel: Omar Qargha, MoHE Official)
- 11:30 – 12:00 **Announcement of SWG members and Strategy for
Moving Forward**
(Panel: Dr. Cheragh Ali Cheragh, Omar Qargha,)
- 12:00 – 1:15 **Lunch and Prayer Break**

Afternoon Session:

- 1:15 – 2:00 **Content Training in Faculties of Education**
(Omar Qargha, HEP)
- 2:15 – 2:45 **planning for Content training Workshops at FoES**
(Working Group)
- 2:45 – 3:00 **Tea Break**
- 3:00 – 4:00 **English Language program**
(Dr. Sky McLaughlin)

Title:

University Presidents and Deans Conference

Objectives:

Presenting the White paper to Deans and Rectors and gaining support from them regarding the Standards and formation of the standards working group.

Meeting Facilitators: MoHE and HEP

Invitees

	Name	Institutions
1	Mohammad Sabir Sabiry	Parwan, Dean of Faculty of Education
2	Sayed Nasruddin	Faculty Member Parwan IHE
3	Sayed Karim Shah Nekmal	Shaikh Zayid University
4	Sayed Mohammad	
5	Dr. Hameedzia	Nangarhar University Rector
6	Abdul Qadier	KEU
7	Abdul Mana Haqyar	KEU
8	Abdul Rashid Haziz	KEU
9	Mohammad Hosman Aman	KEU
10	Asadullah Frogh	KEU
11	Jamshid Rashidee	KEU
12	Abdul Qadir Mohan	Badakhshan Higher Education Institute
13	Dr. Obaibullah Paryar	Paktia Institute of Higher Education
14	Sayed Mohammad Alem	
15	Sefatullah Sayedali	KEU
16	Amir Khan	Baghlan (Dean of Education Faculty)
17	Farmanullah Helaman	Nangarhar, (Dean of Education Faculty)
18	Sayed Roohullah Abidy	Bamiyan, (Dean of Education Faculty)

19	Naematullah Dorkhany	Badakhssh, (Dean of Education Faculty)
20	Eng. Roknoddin Mushaknee	Kandahar, (Dean of Education Faculty)
21	Yarmohammad Pakttin	Paktia, (Dean of Education Faculty)
22	Faizullah Habibi	Jowzjan Higher Education Institute, Rector
23	Ahmad Shah Nazari	
24	Said Noorullah Aminyar	Jowzjan , (Dean of Education Faculty)
25	Najibullah Qurbani	Takhar, (Dean of Education Faculty)
26	Sharifa Nazari	Faryab, (Dean of Education Faculty)
27	Mohammad Arif Yousife	Bamiyan Higher Education Institute, Rector
28	Gull Hassan Walizia	
29	Dr. Mir Akram Merzad	Kabul University
30	Dr. Najibee	
31	Abdul Qoduss Zarifee	Kunduz, Higher Education Institute, Rector
32	Shah Mohmood Saife	Kunduz, Dean of Faculty of Education
33	Omar Qargha	HEP
34	Shoaib Hakemi	HEP
35	Khalid Haris	HEP
37	Dr. Zahir Wahab	HEP
38	Richard Waugh	HEP

Opening issues

I. Deputy Minister (Babury):

The Deputy Minister thanked the people present at the conference and the Higher Education Project (HEP) that is working towards improving the capacity of the professors and the faculties of education. He stated that establishing standards is the most important and demanding basic need of teacher education. Without rebuilding teacher education the rebuilding of the country might be

difficult. The purpose of the Higher Education Project (HEP) is to improve the capacity of professors and the quality of teaching in the faculties of education. Therefore, the establishment of Professional Development Centers (PDC) and Institutional Development Teams (IDT) are important steps toward building the capacities of professors in the Faculties of Education. The other step that will soon begin is establishing Standards for teacher education. The Ministry of Higher Education has established two committees for improving the quality in the area of higher education. 1) Curriculum Development Committee, 2) Standards Development Committee. The establishment of the Standards Working Group, with the help of University Rectors and Deans, is another key step towards national accreditation. The hard work of HEP in building capacity and taking steps toward accreditation is appreciated.

II. Richard Waugh, Chief of Party to HEP

The Higher Education Project is in the third year of its five years duration. A major concern in implementing this project is the development of the Faculties of Education.

Mr. Richard Waugh mentioned the following as HEP's accomplishments:

1. Establishment of PDCs in 8 institutions and soon a PDC will be established in Kandahar.
2. Conducting trainings in the faculties of education in the areas of pedagogy and teaching methods
3. Establishment of English Language and computer training programs at the FoEs. He asked that Rectors and Deans encourage the faculty members to use these facilities in greater numbers as attendance in some places has been disappointing.
4. Some master's program students are in the US and we are looking forward to having the graduates back in Afghanistan.
5. 16 EL participants are in Singapore learning English language and teaching methodology.
6. 22 members of ID are currently in Vietnam for a study tour.
7. The short period study tours will continue till end of the project. At the same time, HEP will bring foreign experts from other countries to help and improve the teacher education programs.
8. The IDT members have made important steps toward making the FoEs more independent; these steps began while conducting conferences and workshops in different areas such as: 1) Introduction to development plans and creating the first few section of the Institutional Development Plans (IPD). 2) Detailed development planning. 3) Implementation of development plans. 4) Project management and proposal writing.
9. The first Science training will be conducted in the near future. Work in establishing a post graduate certificate is in process, and

it is hoped that graduates from this program will continue their studies in the master's program. This program will start in 2009.

We believe that we are going to end this project successfully and what HEP promises will definitely be implemented.

We are looking forward to closer coordination with the MoHE Minister and Deputy Minister to accomplish our goals.

At the end of his speech Mr. Richard Waugh asked the participants if they had any suggestions, comments or questions about HEP.

1. KU: The coordination of HEP is very effective in improving the quality of teacher education programs. Since most women cannot travel out of the country and are eager to get their masters, this cohort of the masters program has selected 20 students from among 150 applicants. I would like to suggest the expansion of this program to 2-3 classes so that we could have more people graduating soon.

Richard: I am fully informed about the program and it is very useful that teachers can get their masters using Dari. At the same time we are trying to expand the masters program but we have constraints due to lack of professors and books.

Deputy Minister: By the time the project finishes we will try our best to become self-dependent. The first attempt in establishing and implementing these programs is very strong.

2. Kunduz: When will the construction of FoEs buildings begin? Regarding the EL trainings, can faculty members take the books home?

Richard: HEP is not working for physical reconstruction, there is another USAID project that works in the area of construction, and the construction project is under the tendering process. In regards to English language books I will discuss this with Sky McLaughlin, ELP manager.

3. Baghlan: In the area of English language learning, it would be better if HEP could hire and send a native speaker to each FoE to work with the ELP trainers in the area of teaching EL.

Richard: We cannot do this because of lack of budget and the problem of security in bringing a native speaker and EL learning expert.

4. Paktia: What is the progress on the construction of buildings, also could HEP hire an EL trainer for Paktia professors? Lastly, could HEP prepare labs materials for our laboratories?

Richard: For purchasing labs materials, the ID stream has specified a budget for each institution. Each institution can prepare a proposal for what they need through the IDT.

5. Khost: Providing EL training for teachers is very important and good, e.g. we have 30-35 professors if they could learn English and they will be able to participate in big seminars.

III. Dr. Zahir Wahab was another speaker at the conference regarding the importance of National Standards as the first step towards national accreditation:

- The education system is in crisis, most of the students are not getting places in colleges, schools don't have books and most girls don't go to school.
- Most of the teachers don't have a BA Degree and it seems that weak students are introduced to teacher education institutions.
- The Afghanistan diploma is not valid in other counties, but teachers are the basic element of improvement, and the teacher education system is disorganized.

What should we do?

- We have to make teacher education professional. The only way of doing this is to establish and implement standards for teacher education. We need to identify and implement standards for the purpose of improving the future of teacher education programs.

Who can do this activity?

- An expert and knowledgeable team or teams from different subjects
- Experts in the area of curriculum, teaching materials, pedagogical affairs, assessment and education psychology.

Results

- Improved knowledge and professional skills of the teachers
- Faculties of teacher education responsible for training expertise of teachers
- Improved teacher education in the country
- Teachers will be seen as key, independent and professional people in the community.

How could we implement the process of standardization?

- Establish a working group
- Discussions and negotiations between MoHE and MoE authorities
- MoHE should establish a policy and strategy for implementing the idea of accreditation.

In the United State the accreditation process began 40 years ago and it is still continuing. In other disciplines such as Medical,

Engineering and Law the accreditation began 100 years ago, and this process has to begin in Afghanistan as soon as possible.

Discussions regarding the implementation of the standards raised by Kunduz, Dean of Education as follow:

1. Everybody hopes to achieve good standards and to train high standard teachers. There is a library in Massachusetts for the students to use the books at any time or copy books using a small amount of money. In Afghanistan teachers don't have bread or food to eat and we have the problem of lack of salary. How can we achieve high standards in such a situation?
Dr. Wahab: If you look at the history of US while implementing standards in their system, they had the same problems and difficulties. The only way to have professional and skillful teachers is to develop standards for the system of teaching.
2. The Rector from Paktia recognized the importance of establishing standards but felt that they cannot solve all other problems.

IV. Omar Qargha:

- The need for moving towards standard is evident.
- The work towards establishing standards, as presented in the HEP White Paper, in Faculties of Education should be started as soon as possible.
- Implementation of Standards in the FoEs should be used as a pilot, experiences should be shared with other faculties, and opportunities should be sought for expansion of standards into other faculties.

V. Dr Cheragh:

- He spoke on the importance of the standards and explained that if we want to have a high standard system of teacher education we need to have a group of people to work together and finalize the ideas of standards and implement it in the faculties of education
- Dr. Cheragh asked each faculty of education to introduce a representative as a member of SWG.
- The following members of SWG were introduced by each university that have faculties of education:

Ministry of Higher Education:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. Dr. Sheragh Ali Cheragh | Chair of SWG (Ministry of Higher Education) |
| 2. Dr. Mir Akram | Deputy Chair of SWG (Kabul University) |
| 3. Abdul Manan Haqyar | Secretary of the SWG (KEU) |

4. Shoaib Hakemi	(Reporter, HEP)
5. Dr. Abdul haq	Member (Kabul University, FoE)
6. Abdul Qadeer Royan	Member (KEU)
7. Sefatullah Syedalee	Member (KEU)
8. Assadullah Frogh	Member (KEU)
9. Dastgeer	Member (Balkh)
10.Aminyar Sahib	Member (Jowzjan)
11.Habibullah Habibi	Member (Jowzjan)
12.Sharifa	Member (Faryab)
13.Sayed Nassridden Sabri	Member (Parwan)
14.Shah Mahmood saiffee	Member (Kunduz)
15. Najibullah Qurbani	Member (Takhar)
16. Naematullah Durkhanae	Member (Badakhshan)
17. Asifa Aemaq	Member (Herat)
18. Roknoddin Mushkaneer	Member (Kandahar)
19. Karim Shah Nikmal	Member (Khost)
20.Paktin	Member (Paktia)
21.Amir khan	Member (Baghlan)
22.Roohullah Abidy	Member (Bamyan)
23.Farmanullah Helaman	Member (Nangarhar)
24.Omar Qargha	(Facilitator, HEP)

Afternoon Session:

The afternoon session mostly discussed the content training in the faculties of education and ELP related issue:

VI. Omar Qargha, Shoaib Hakemi

- Training in the area of content will be undertaken between June and September. The faculty Deans and Rectors were asked to write the dates of the summer vacation of their institutions, so that HEP could conduct content training.

VII. Dr. Sky McLaughlin

Dr. McLaughlin conducted a session on questions and answers related to the English Language program.

Lesson Learned

In the beginning the idea of accreditation and standards seemed difficult for the Deans and Rectors but when Dr. Wahab and Omar described the benefits of this process, the Deans and the Rectors were very enthusiastic. Qargha gave a detailed presentation regarding the importance of standards and about beginning the implementation of this idea.