



**Strengthening Teacher Education in Pakistan through the
Development of a Strategic Framework for Policy Dialogue,
Professional Development, Coordination, and National
Standards for Teacher Certification and Accreditation**

**UNESCO Islamabad
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Summary of proposal

1. **Title** Strengthening Teacher Education in Pakistan through the Development of a Strategic Framework for Policy Dialogue, Coordination, and National Standards for Teacher Certification and Accreditation.
2. **Area** Federal and Provincial capitals and selected districts.
3. **Objectives**
 - i. To develop a framework for policy dialogue and coordination in teacher education.
 - ii. To devise and inclusive and effective mechanism for coordinating state, non-state and donor interventions in teacher education.
 - iii. To develop a strategic framework for teacher education at the federal and provincial level.
 - iv. To help establish a national body/authority for teacher certification and accreditation.
 - v. To create/strengthen effective and sustainable partnerships and networks – teacher networks, school networks, public-private partnerships - that support and underpin teachers' professional development.
 - vi. To identify and consider scaling up proven innovations and best practices in teacher education.
 - vii. To develop strategies for improving the status of teachers and teaching profession.
 - viii. To identify and operationalize selected strategic sites for professional growth at federal, provincial, district and school levels.
4. **Beneficiaries** National education system, teacher education institutions, elementary and secondary school teachers and students.
5. **Partners** Higher Education Commission, Ministry of Education, University of education, Lahore, Provincial Institutes of Teacher education, IED-AKU, Ali Institute, AED, TRC.
6. **Duration** Three years, starting 2005
7. **Budget** US\$3,390,000

Summary

The principal objective of the project is to improve the quality and professional development of teachers and teacher training institutions through the development of a strategic framework for 1) policy formulation and dialogue with a view to building consensus and mobilizing support for teacher education, 2) effective coordination of interventions in teacher education, including field-based teacher education activities, and 3) standard-setting for teacher certification and accreditation. The goal is to completely overhaul the teacher education system in terms of policy, organization, jurisdictional and institutional roles and responsibilities, content, and delivery at the school level. A key element of this will be to move away from the traditional notion of teacher training to the broader concept of teacher professional development. This requires a transformation of the policies and processes that support the teachers' professional development, making teacher education pedagogically and practically oriented and enabling teachers to teach in multiple contexts involving diverse groups of children. **Guiding principles:** The implementation of the project will be guided by four main principles: 1) Constructivist inquiry 2) partnerships 3) context and 4) professionalism.

1. Background and rationale

The education system in Pakistan faces a number of challenges. A critical area of concern and one that needs urgent attention is teacher education and issues related to the status of teachers and teaching profession. The National Education Policy (1998-2010) highlights a number of concerns including: absence of a coherent policy framework for teacher education, outdated and heavily theoretical pre-service teacher education courses, inadequate and sporadic in-service teacher training, lack of qualified and experienced teacher educators, and a lack of fit between teacher education and the curriculum taught in schools. The Education Sector Reforms Action Plan (2001-2005) also identifies teacher education as a critical area of concern and proposes to improve the quality of education through preparation of better teachers. More recently, the challenges underlying teacher education have come into sharper focus in an external evaluation conducted in the context of the Punjab Education Sector reform Programme (PESRP). It was revealed that the teacher education and training provided by the University of Education in 2002-2003 fell far short of expectations, leading the authorities there to initiate efforts aimed at rethinking the entire teacher education system in the province.

In terms of number of teachers and teacher training institutions, Pakistan seems to be relatively in good shape. Pakistan has a teaching force, at elementary and secondary levels, estimated at 633,204, hundreds of teacher training institutions in the public sector, including 210 elementary teacher training colleges, and a number of well-established teacher education schools in the private sector. There are even indications that there are surplus trained teachers in some provinces. There is also evidence that there has been a great deal of effort and considerable investment to improve teacher education in recent years, with the bulk of the inputs coming from donors and NGOs. Unfortunately, a vast majority of teacher educators and teacher training institutions are frequently out of touch with the day-to-day realities of schools and actual classroom experiences. More importantly, the absence of a coherent national strategic framework for teacher education has rendered most of these individual and fragmented inputs/initiatives ineffective.

According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report (2005), Pakistan is among the group of countries which are far from achieving the Education for All goals of universal primary education, gender parity, literacy and quality by 2015. This is also confirmed in the recently concluded Pakistan Millennium Development Goal Report. The reasons are many and varied, but there is no doubt that a great deal can be attributed to the weaknesses and gaps in the country's teacher education system.

This project aims to overhaul the teacher education system, with the understanding that it is better to rebuild the teacher education and professional

development system in its totality rather than investing in fragmented individual inputs or processes.

This is in line with UNESCO's programme priorities and strategic objectives. Moreover, as the UN specialized agency for education, UNESCO has at its disposal a vast repertoire of expertise and experience in teacher education. UNESCO is also well-placed to help radically transform teacher policy and teacher education through the use of its two international normative instruments: *1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendations concerning the Status of Teachers and 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel*.

2. Strategic objective

The principal objective of the project is to improve the quality and professional development of teachers and teacher training institutions through the development of a strategic framework for 1) policy formulation and dialogue with a view to building consensus and mobilizing support for teacher education, 2) effective coordination of interventions in teacher education, including field-based teacher education activities, and 3) standard-setting for teacher certification and accreditation. The goal is to completely overhaul the teacher education system in terms of policy, organization, jurisdictional and institutional roles and responsibilities, content, and delivery at the school level. A key element of this will be to move away from the traditional notion of teacher training to the broader concept of teacher professional development. This requires a transformation of the policies and processes that support the teachers' professional development. The purpose is to align teacher education with the school curriculum and the learning needs of the students. This makes teacher education pedagogically and practically oriented, enabling teachers to teach in multiple contexts involving diverse groups of children.

3. Specific Objectives

- To develop a framework for policy dialogue and coordination in teacher education.
- To devise an inclusive and effective mechanism for coordinating state, non-state and donor interventions in teacher education.
- To develop a strategic framework for teacher education at the federal and provincial level.
- To develop national standards for teacher certification and accreditation.
- To create/strengthen effective and sustainable partnerships and networks – teacher networks, school networks, public-private partnerships - that support and underpin teachers' professional development.
- To identify and consider scaling up proven innovations and best practices in teacher education.
- To develop strategies for improving the status of teachers and teaching

profession.

- To identify and operationalize selected strategic sites for professional growth at federal, provincial, district and school levels.

4. Strategic approach for implementation

The implementation approach will be based on a broad-based and consensus-oriented participatory consultation. UNESCO will convene a core team of teacher education specialists to furnish the project with technical expertise and guidance and to facilitate coordination, supervision and monitoring. UNESCO will also take the lead to mobilize support from UN agencies and development partners. The task of engaging provinces, civil society organizations, and private players in discussions and dialogue will be led by the Ministry of Education.

5. Main activities

- A series of participatory consultations with key stakeholders and partners.
- Develop a framework for policy dialogue and coordination.
- Develop a strategic framework for teacher education at federal and provincial levels.
- Develop national standards for teacher certification and accreditation and explore the possibility of establishing a national council for teacher accreditation.
- Conduct a study on identifying proven innovations and best practices in teacher education.
- Identify and mobilize expert practicing teachers, with a view to empowering them to actively participate in the professional development of less competent teachers at school and cluster of schools levels through networking, peer coaching, and self-directed development.
- Create/strengthen effective and sustainable networks and partnerships that support teachers' professional development, including teacher networks and school networks.
- Clearing house – gathering, disseminating and sharing information, knowledge and best practices in teacher education.
- Identify and operationalize selected strategic sites (some of the existing Teacher Resource Centers can be utilized) for professional growth of teachers at federal, provincial, and district levels.
- Launch a campaign across Pakistan aimed at enhancing the status of teachers and teaching profession.
- Establish and pilot appropriate and sustainable incentives to reward excellence of teachers and schools.
- Organize an international expert meeting on trends and latest developments in teacher education and professional development.

Guiding principles: The proposed activities will be guided by four main principles: 1) Constructivist inquiry 2) partnerships 3) context and 4) professionalism.

6. Expected Results

- A strategic framework for teacher education developed.
- A framework for policy dialogue and coordination developed.
- National standards for teacher certification and accreditation developed.
- Coordination of interventions in teacher education enhanced.
- Status of teachers and the teaching profession enhanced.
- Teachers' involvement in their own professional development and in educational reforms increased.
- Public-private partnerships in teacher education strengthened.
- An international expert meeting on teacher education organized.

7. Duration

The project will have a three-year timeframe, starting in 2005 and ending 2007.

8. Partners

Development Partners: UN UNDAF Education Partners, USAID, DFID and other relevant bilateral and multilateral actors in the area of teacher education

Federal: Higher Education Commission, Ministry of Education, and Education Section of the Planning Commission.

Provincial: Departments of Education, University of Education and Directorate of Staff Development (Punjab), Provincial Institutes of Teacher Education (Balochistan, NWFP, Sindh), selected Teacher Resource Centers (TRCs)

Private: Selected private institutions including, Ali Institute, Lahore, Institute of Educational Development, Aga Khan University, Karachi.

Civil Society Organizations/NGOs: Selected organizations working in the field of teacher education, including AED and TRC.

9. Risks

The following are envisaged:

- Jurisdictional difficulties pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of the Federal, Provincial, and District governments.
- Limited implementation capacities at both federal and provincial levels.
- Lack of genuine and broad-based participation of all key stakeholders may prove difficult.
- Bureaucratic delays.