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**Primary and Secondary Schooling
Sub-Sector Report**

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مرور مشترک سالانه سکتور تعلیم و تربیه

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Primary and Secondary Education
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1 Introduction

This review report focuses on the primary and secondary education sub-sector for the Education Joint Sector Review (EJSR). Accordingly the review takes as its starting point the National Education Interim Plan (EIP) 2011-2013, the National Education Strategic Plan 2010-2014 (NESP-2) and the corresponding annual operational plan for 1390 (2011/2012) of the Ministry of Education. The review also takes into consideration the program document and plans associated with the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), although implementation of this program has not yet started. As part of the process of becoming a GPE member an Education Sector Analysis was conducted as well as an evaluation of NESP-2. Where relevant these analyses are also incorporated into this review report. As with the other sub-sectors this review of the primary and secondary education sub-sector will look at progress against annual planned targets in the EIP. In addition as the specific theme of the 2012 EJSR is "female teachers" a separate section on that topic is included in the text that follows.

As specified in the terms of reference for the EJSR the review will look specifically at issues of **access, equity, quality, relevance and management** in order to identify persistent challenges and any recommendations for improving implementation during 2012 and subsequent years. The review incorporates data from the Ministry of Education and its development partners including bilateral donors, United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations.

2 The review process and approach

The review of the primary and secondary education sub-sector consisted of:

- A desk review of reports prepared by the Ministry of Education Department of Planning and Evaluation (DoPE) as well as by other partners. These reports include monitoring and progress reports as well as evaluation reports when available.
- Meetings and interviews with education stakeholders including Ministry of Education staff at the central level, donors, UN and NGO representatives
- Analysis of primary data obtained from DoPE
- School visits and interviews in Kabul City and Panjshir province (summaries of these visits are included in Annex 1)

3 Sub-sector background since 2001

The development of the primary and secondary education sub-sector since 2001 is truly impressive. In 2001, after 20 years of brutal war, fewer than one million boys were enrolled in 3,400 mostly inadequate schools and taught by 20,000 teachers with rather limited qualifications. Girls were abandoned. The education administration was in tatters.

A decade later in 2011, student enrollment in government-supported General and Islamic education had increased sevenfold to 7.5 million (39% female); over 13,000 primary and secondary schools were operational, even in insecure areas of the country; and over 172,000 teachers (31% female) were deployed to the schools. This is a historical achievement and evidence of a herculean will for education among Afghan families, students, teachers, and the Ministry as a whole, particularly considering the on-going insecurity, widespread poverty, and uncertain future prospects that continue to mark life in Afghanistan.

Yet the needs within the sub-sector remain staggering. The flip side of the achievement is an unmet demand for quality, capacity issues at many levels, provincial disparities in access and quality, dependence on donor funding, and a looming pressure on secondary education as increasingly larger cohorts graduate from primary school. The investment in access will ultimately be a wasted one if quality is found lacking.

The decade was also marked by a steady increase in attacks on education. There was some success in mitigation by the end of the decade through sustained advocacy, community based solutions and negotiations with anti-government elements to keep schools open. Nonetheless and understandably, security-related risks in 1390 remained one of the most significant deterrents for parents to send their children to school in some parts of the country.

In 1386 (2007), the Ministry of Education designed its first National Education Strategic Plan (NESP), followed by a second NESP in 1389 and a National Education Interim Plan (EIP) for 2011-2013. In 1390 (2011), Afghanistan obtained membership in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), with the possibility of a \$55.7 million allotment. This was the result of a decade of steady reform, where systems were created from scratch for almost every facet of educational planning and management.

4 Main progress in 1390/2011

4.1 Access

In 1390 approximately 7.5 million children were enrolled in primary and secondary education in Afghanistan through the government's General or Islamic Education schools (see Table 1). In addition more than 124,000 children were enrolled in 511 private schools (including 60 primary schools, 106 lower secondary and 345 upper secondary schools) and another 219,170 children (94,733 boys and 124,437 girls) were enrolled in community based outreach classes which mostly taught only the primary grades.

In 1390, 250,000 new students entered primary and secondary education (Grades 1-12). The Ministry estimates the Gross Intake Rate was approximately 87% in 1390, which is comparable to the gross intake rate of 85% reported in 1389. As part of the standard process of increasing enrolment and retaining previously enrolled children in the system the Ministry conducted public awareness activities throughout the country at the start of the school year. These campaigns are generally conducted with the cooperation of the school shuras and may involve messages delivered at the mosque to encourage children to go to school. In most provinces a public awareness campaign was conducted before the start of the school year but in some provinces (Farah, Baghis, Takhar, Kabul City, Nangarhar and Balkh) multiple activities were conducted.

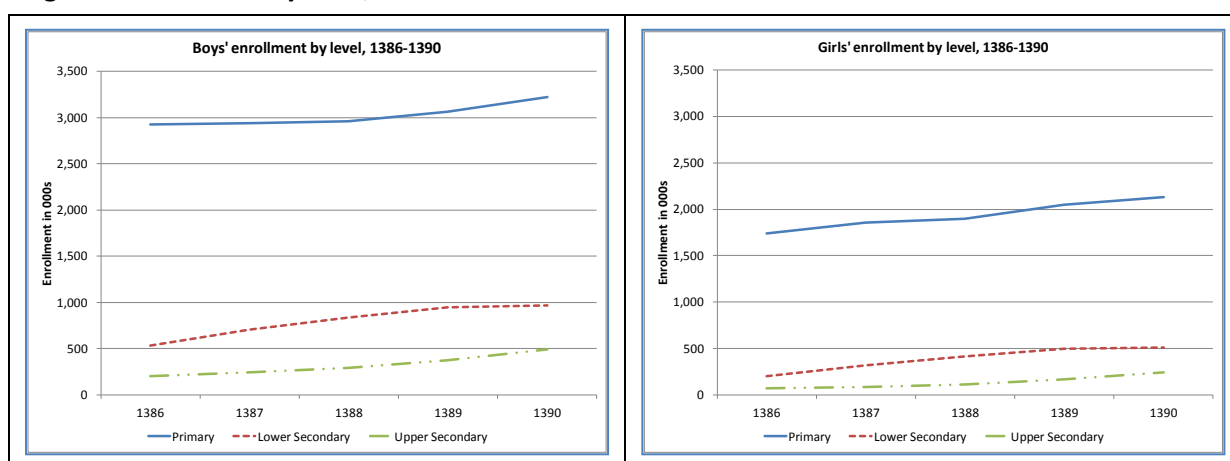
Table 1. Total enrollment, General and Islamic Education, 1390.

Grade 1-12 enrollment	1390 Actual Achievements			1390 Target	% Achieved
	Male	Female	Total		
General Education	4,487,100	2,841,422	7,328,222	7,714,000	95%
Islamic Education*	163,479	28,728	192,207	161,000	119%
Total	4,650,579	2,870,150	7,520,429	7,875,000	96%

* Another 2,010 young people (1,911 male and 99 female) were enrolled in Grades 13 and 14 of Islamic Education in 1390
Source: MoE school survey data, 1390.

While it is not possible to estimate the number of children in Afghanistan who still do not have access to education, the latest estimates were that in 1389 only 55% of primary school-age children and 32% of secondary school-age children were enrolled in school (CSO and UNICEF, 2012). As shown in Figure 1 and Table 2, enrolment at the lower and upper secondary levels, while still relatively low, is increasing. Over the last two years enrolment at the lower secondary level has levelled off for boys and increased only slightly for girls. Enrolment at the higher secondary level continued to increase for both boys and girls. More children enrolling at the secondary level (especially girls) will have enormous implications related to the quality of teaching and availability of female secondary teachers in the upcoming years.

Figure 1. Enrolment by level, 1386-1390



Source: EMIS School Survey data for 1390.

As shown in Table 2, enrolment at all educational levels has increased by an estimated 29% (or nearly 1.7 million children) over the last five years. This places huge stresses on the system in terms of providing space for schooling and hiring qualified teachers to deal with the increased demand for education.

Table 2. Enrolment in General Schools (in 000s): 1386 -1390 (2007-2011)

Year	Primary (Grades 1-6)			Lower Secondary (Grades 7-9)			Upper Secondary (Grades 10-12)			Grand Total (Grades 1-12)
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
1386 / 2007	2,930	1,738	4,669	534	202	736	203	68	271	5,676
1387 / 2008	2,942	1,858	4,800	703	318	1,021	240	87	327	6,148
1388 / 2009	2,958	1,899	4,857	835	416	1,251	292	114	406	6,514
1389 / 2010	3,065	2,047	5,112	948	499	1,447	377	164	542	7,101
1390 / 2011	3,083	2,097	5,179	935	503	1,438	470	241	711	7,328
% increase 1386-1390	5%	21%	11%	75%	149%	95%	132%	254%	162%	29%

Sources: 2007: 1386 (2007) Schools Survey: Summary Report. 2008: 1387-1388 Education Summary Report. 2009-2011: EMIS school survey data.

While the enrolment gains are impressive, several concerns still exist with regard to the educational data (see Box 1). These concerns seriously impede MoE's ability to plan for expansion of the education system over the coming years.

Box 1. Interpreting Educational Data

"Ideally, policy makers would know how many children of official school age are in school and complete their primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education. Currently, this is extremely difficult to record, for a number of reasons:

- First, there [are] no accurate data on population by age, although projections have been developed using UN data or Afghanistan Central Statistical Office figures. The last National Census was in 1979. Accordingly, it is virtually impossible to calculate ratios using age at school grade data. No net and gross enrolment ratios can be calculated with any measure of accuracy.
- Second, enrolment statistics are based on questionnaire based surveys conducted in schools each year (since 1386/2007) with all the imperfections associated with one off survey data.
- Third, information is not available for all schools. The 1387 (2008) report, for example, records that information on 1,782 schools is incomplete (17% of all general education schools).
- Fourth, enrolment data are based on attendance at the time of the survey with students being recorded as attending school, absent from school or permanently absent from school. A student can be registered as permanently absent for up to three years.
- Fifth, by totaling the number of students in each of these three categories (attendance, absence and permanently absent) figures for the total enrolment in a school are calculated. So when the data for all schools [are] aggregated it inflates the actual number of students participating in schooling.
- Sixth, schools may be tempted to inflate attendance figures because access to some resources is related to enrolment levels (e.g. school grants from EQUIP); also, some children may be enrolled in different schools in the course of a year.

These facts suggest that any attempt to calculate gross enrolment rates (GER) or net enrolment rates (NER) is deeply problematic.

Data in the EMIS annual survey reports suggest that between 800,000 and 1.2 million children are "permanently absent" from school. If these children are factored into GER and NER calculations then there is a major inflation in enrolment and participation levels in general education in Afghanistan."

Source: Afghanistan Education Sector Analysis, 2010 by Steve Packer et al.

For 1390 the Ministry of Education reports that there were also over one million children (672,175 boys and 402,851 girls) identified as "permanently absent". This raises a challenge with regard to both planning for future needs as well as the bigger issue of how to re-attract those children back into school. The social awareness campaigns and school shuras should also explore reasons why these children are permanently absent and try to find ways of bringing them back to school.

4.1.1 Major obstacles to access to education

In Afghanistan there are multiple obstacles that affect children's access to education. These include a shortage of physical infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, lack of schools in remote rural areas, insecurity and cultural and economic issues that prevent children from enrolling in or attending school. Each of these is discussed briefly below except for cultural and economic issues as these are discussed in more detail in the Equity section of this report.

Shortage of physical infrastructure

The Ministry of Education estimates that in 1390 only 50% of the 13,071 general education schools had buildings. Some schools operated in rented buildings while in others children attended class in the open air. During 1390 the Infrastructure Services Department (ISD) focused its efforts on completing projects that had been started in earlier years rather than on initiating new projects. According to ISD, 397 schools (with nearly 3,400 classrooms and approximately 1,200 administrative rooms) were completed in 1390. Construction of some of these schools started as early as 1385. In addition, ISD reports finishing another 215 projects ranging from repair of water wells, toilets and

boundary walls, to construction of a teacher training college (TTC), ten Islamic schools and outreach schools. In addition to the completion of these projects MoE initiated the procurement process for approximately 100 additional schools. Even with an optimistic projection of being able to construct 500 schools per year, it would still take at least 13 years to construct the remaining 50% of the needed school facilities. The general lack of physical infrastructure can affect access to education as children may drop out of school (or not enrol) when classrooms are over-crowded. In the case of girls' education, lack of physical infrastructure, including a school boundary wall, often means that parents will not send their daughters to school, especially past Grade 4. (See also the section on Girls' Education below.)

Shortage of teachers

In 1390 MoE recruited approximately 12,000 new teachers (including 2,610 new female teachers). The Ministry has set a target student-teacher ratio of 35:1. In 1389 the overall student-teacher ratio was approximately 44:1 and in 1390 it was approximately 42:1. This was an improvement though the ratio is still higher than the Ministry's target. Due to the lower number of students enrolled in secondary education, it is also most certainly the case that the class sizes in the lower primary grades greatly exceed the overall average of 42:1. Information is not currently available to estimate student-teacher ratios by grade level or level of the system (e.g. primary, lower secondary, upper secondary). In addition, information is not available about the number of teachers assigned to girls' schools in order to compare student-teacher ratios for girls compared to boys, which is particularly a concern in the upper grades as lack of female teachers is often a barrier to education. As a very crude indicator the ratio of female general education students to female general education teachers is approximately 52:1 and in some provinces it is significantly higher. As discussed in the section on girls' education the presence of female teachers especially at higher grade levels is often a key determinant in whether parents will allow their girls to continue in school.

Lack of schools in remote rural areas

In some areas of the country children have to walk for long distances in order to reach school. This often means that children do not attend or enrol in school. One answer to this obstacle is to increase enrolment in community based schools which are small multi-grade schools (usually only primary) with few teachers. In 1390 more than 200,000 children (nearly 57% girls) attended over 7,000 community-based outreach classes operating in 32 provinces throughout the country (not including Helmand and Zabul). This was significantly short of the target of 9,600 outreach classes planned for in EIP. One reason for the shortfall in CBE classes is the closure of the USAID-funded PACE-A program in 1390. In some instances PACE-A partners either discontinued their CBE programs altogether or reduced the scope of their activities to match available funding for CBE. Increased attention to this issue will be critical in 1391 and following. A new CBE project BEACON¹ will help increase the number of outreach classes in 1391. The GPE program document also included a proposal for the provision of outreach classes in the 13 targeted provinces which, if funding materializes, will also increase the number of total outreach classes in the country. As of 1390 the main providers of CBE were UNICEF (119,937 children), SCA (51,334), BRAC (19,128), Save the Children (14,205), CARE (6,633), CRS (5,236) and Aga Khan Foundation (2,697).

¹The Basic Education Consortium for Afghanistan (BEACON) is funded by CIDA and implemented by CARE, the International Rescue Committee, Aga Khan Foundation and Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

Increasing the number of community-based education classes is a MoE priority in both the EIP and the program document as proposed to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). These community-based outreach classes facilitate access to education by decreasing the distance children must travel in order to attend school and by reducing the security risk for children in some parts of the country. Increased attention to establishing more of these classes and linking them to the nearest hub school is a critical priority in the coming years in order to increase access to primary education throughout the country.

Effect of insecurity on access to education

One obstacle that impedes access to education is insecurity in general and attacks on education in particular. The Ministry of Education reports that at the end of 1390, 500 schools (equivalent to 15% of all schools in the affected, insecure provinces) were still closed due to insecurity (see Table 3). As a result of these school closures more than 114,000 children did not have access to schooling. The number of schools reported as closed in 1390 is lower than the 670 schools reported as closed in 1387/2008 (Packer et al., 2010) but has increased since April, 2010 (1389) when the Ministry reported that 402 schools in 11 provinces were closed as a result of insecurity or violence (Packer et al., 2010).

Table 3. Closed and re-opened schools in 10 insecure provinces of Afghanistan

Province	Total number of schools	No. of Re-Opened Schools, 1389-1390	No. of Closed Schools
Helmand	332	54	112
Kandahar	424	83	152
Uruzgan	265	33	58
Zabul	213	41	128
Farah	330	9	15
Nimroz	125	2	2
Badghis	408	11	3
Ghazni	584	22	7
Khost	283	2	8
Paktika	337	22	15
Total	3301	279	500

Source: Security and Protection Directorate, 1390.

The School Protection Unit's database categorizes school attacks as acts of terror (in which the school itself is targeted) or school violence resulting from random criminal activities (such as fighting between students or community feuds) which spill over into the school. According to the 1390 (2011) statistics, the majority of school attacks were the result of criminal activities (77) rather than terror attacks or school-targeted violence (68). The number of persons killed and injured in schools as a result of criminal and terrorist activities in 1390 was 402 and 410, respectively, which was an increase since the ESA reported figures of 163 persons killed and 305 injured in 1388 (2009).

As noted in the ESA, “The most important feature of school protection is that it must be community-implemented and community-endorsed to be effective. In areas where communities have built schools themselves and/or contributed with resources and their own labour to providing educational facilities, they have a vested interest in protecting these resources. The EQUIP program offers a positive model of community endorsement of schools which has been successful in keeping many schools safe.” The MoE Security and Protection Directorate is also working to involve communities in the protection of their schools. In 1390 they reported establishing 7,000 school protection councils which consist of parents, elders, religious leaders and other influential people in the community. These councils coordinate with the community to assist the school councils and work with them to keep the school environment secure for the students. Both EQUIP and GPE have called for increased attention to social mobilization and working with communities in terms of safety and security as well as increasing access to education. Continued and increased effort will be needed to re-open schools, keep schools open and make sure that children are safe while at school and on their way to school.

4.1.2 Major access-related targets for 1390

The EIP outlines targets for each year of the plan. The major access-related targets for primary and secondary education are shown in Table 4 below alongside the results from 1390.

Table 4. Status of EIP targets for 1390.

Key actions	1390 Target	1390 Results	Status
Increase enrollment in basic education (Grades 1-9)	GE: 6,960,000 IE: 161,000	GE & CBE: 6,836,513 IE: 194,217	GE: 98% of target IE: target exceeded
Increase enrollment in upper secondary education	GE: 754,000	GE: 710,879	94% of target
Establish new schools	GE: 700 IE: 87	GE: 619 IE: 150	GE: 88% of target IE: target exceeded
Upgrade primary schools to lower secondary schools	600	602	Target exceeded
Upgrade lower secondary schools to upper secondary schools	440	443	Target exceeded
At least one girls' secondary school in rural districts staffed with average six qualified female teachers (with spouse)	200	Data not available.	
Establish CBE and accelerated learning centers	9,600	7,097	74% of target - more emphasis needed
Construction of classrooms	6,000	3,833 classrooms, 125 outreach classes, 1,269 administrative rooms	66% of target for classrooms only
Construction of science labs	100	0	Not met
Reconstruction of existing classrooms	1,500	108 classrooms 32 administrative rooms	10% of target
Construction of boundary walls	200	35	18% of target
Construction of latrines	500	24	5% of target
Construction of drinking water wells	500	15	3% of target
Provision of tables and chairs for students	400,000	142,424	36% of target

Sources: ISD 1390 project completion matrix, 1390 EMIS data, DoPE 1390 Annual Progress Report.

As shown in Table 4, the access-related targets for 1390 were largely achieved with regard to enrolment increases in both General and Islamic Education. As discussed earlier the Community

Based Education target was not achieved but the start of the new BEACON project in 1391 and possible GPE funding for use with community based education will help to put CBE back on track for 1394 though additional effort will be needed beyond the two mentioned initiatives.

Construction of classrooms, boundary walls, latrines and water supplies are seriously lagging. A recent World Bank review (2011) found that, "All or combinations of items like desks and chairs, water point, latrines and tin roofs were not provided at many completed schools and may also not be provided at many under-construction schools due to lack of funds." The World Bank is working with ISD and the EQUIP team to address these deficiencies which are also likely to exist at schools not funded by EQUIP. A new Director of ISD was appointed at the end of 1390 and more engineers have been hired to monitor the construction process. As discussed in the Management section lengthy delays in procurement are likely to continue in the near future which probably means that construction targets will not be met throughout the time period of the EIP. As a result the Ministry must plan to continue renting premises for schools and look to alternative spaces to use as classrooms, such as local mosques.

4.2 Equity

The Ministry has made great strides in making education more equitable over the last 10 years, especially with regard to girls, but more work is needed. In 1388 the Ministry of Education with support from UNESCO conducted a needs assessment for inclusive education and has subsequently developed a policy in cooperation with the Inclusive and Child Friendly Education Working Group.² The Ministry defines Inclusive and Child Friendly Education as one that "ensures that all children have equal access to quality education regardless of their gender, age, abilities, disabilities/ impairments, health conditions, circumstances, as well as socio-economic, religious, ethnic, and language backgrounds."

Inclusive and Child Friendly Education is included as a target in EIP and NESP-2. In 1389 UNESCO and the Inclusive and Child Friendly Education Working Group supported the MoE in establishing a Directorate for Education for All that covers the 12 groups identified as vulnerable and isolated from the Education system. See Table 5 for a description of these groups as presented in the 2010 Education Sector Analysis (ESA). As also noted in the ESA (Packer et al., 2010: 82), "Many [inclusive education] specialists would be reluctant to include a gender-related category on the grounds that mainstream education is for all children. But the circumstances in Afghanistan largely dictate that girls are vulnerable and require targeted action." As such a separate section on Girls' Education is also included below.

² The membership of the Inclusive and Child Friendly Education Working Group includes Afghan Association of the Blind (AAB), Afghan National Association of the Blind (ANAB), Afghan National Association of the Deaf (ANAD), Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), BRAC, Children in Crisis, Family Welfare Foundation (FWF), Handicap International (HI), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Kabul Education University, Mine Action Coordination Center of Afghanistan (MACCA), Ministry of Education (MOE), Nejat Centre, Norwegian Afghanistan Committee, Rahyab Organization, Save the Children, SERVE Afghanistan, Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), UNESCO, UNICEF and War Child Holland.

Table 5. MoE's Identified Priority Groups for Inclusive Education

Groups	Available Data and Strategies Identified through the 2010 Education Sector Analysis
Girls	Approx. 6 million school age children are girls - Girls' Education Working Group is developing strategies to more effectively reach girls
Children Affected by Conflict and War	No reliable data; [500 schools remain closed (see above)]
Children Affected by Drugs	No reliable data
Children from Ethnic, Language, Social & Religious Minorities	As many as 3.6 million children ⁽¹⁾ belong to Ethnic, Language, Social & Religious Minorities
Children from Poor Economic Backgrounds	Approx. 8.4 million school age children live in poverty or substandard conditions ⁽²⁾
Children in Conflict with the Law/ Children in Incarceration	4,000-5,000 children are in custody of the Ministry of Justice, according to MoE sources ⁽³⁾
Children Living Far Away from Schools/ Villages where there are no schools	No reliable data until school mapping occurs but likely a large percentage of the 5 million school age children not attending school. CBE initiatives focus on these children.
Children Living on the Street/ Homeless Children	No reliable data, but homelessness not prevalent in Afghanistan ⁽⁴⁾
Children Suffering from Neglect, Abandonment and/or Abuse	No reliable data ⁽⁴⁾
Children with Disabilities	No reliable data - MoE Inclusive Education Section states that Kabul-based activities are occurring ⁽⁴⁾ ; also MoLSAMD implements some education for children with disabilities through the orphanages they operate.
Nomadic (Kuchi) children	1.0 – 1.5 Million Kuchi Children ⁽⁵⁾ - MoE/ Kuchi Education states that limited educational activities are occurring ⁽⁴⁾ (see section on Kuchi education below)
Working Children	No reliable data ⁽⁴⁾

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ "Needs & Rights Assessment: Inclusive Education in Afghanistan" estimates that 20-30% of children can be defined as minorities, depending on how widely the term minorities is applied, MoE/UNESCO, 2009, page 13.

⁽²⁾ Estimate from the Needs & Rights Assessment: Inclusive Education in Afghanistan. 2009.

⁽³⁾ MoE/ Deputy Ministry provided this estimate in meeting w/ ESA team, April 2010.

⁽⁴⁾ To the extent that these populations are available/reachable within the catchment centres of the UNESCO, UNICEF and MACCA-sponsored Pilot Schools for Inclusive Education (which are all located within the Kabul area), these populations are targeted through these initiatives.

⁽⁵⁾ Estimate from the "Needs & Rights Assessment: Inclusive Education in Afghanistan," 2009.

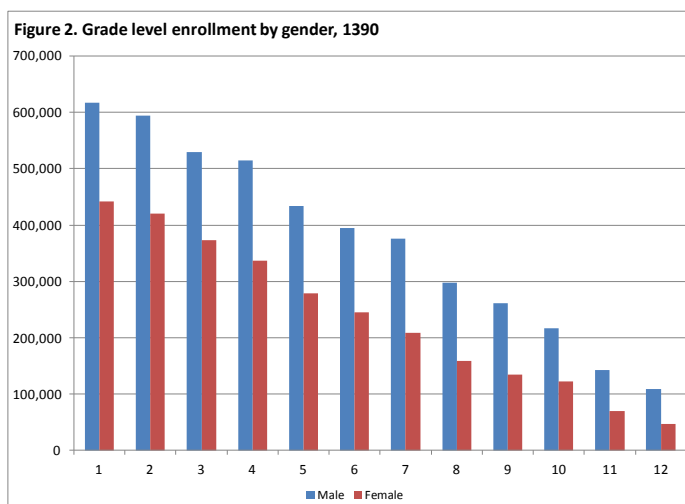
Source: Afghanistan Education Sector Analysis 2010 by Steve Packer et al.

The Inclusive and Child Friendly Education concept was first introduced in 29 Pilot Schools in Kabul. In 1390 (2011) an additional 60 schools (including 740 teachers, 1,200 parents, 30 head teachers and 10 school principals) received training at the request of the Director of Education for All. The teachers who participated in the training received the Inclusive and Learning Friendly Environment Tool Kit in Dari language, which is a comprehensive guide for teachers in making their classes inclusive, learning-friendly environments; working with families and communities; getting all

children in school; managing inclusive and learning-friendly classrooms and creating a healthy and productive inclusive and learning-friendly classroom.

4.2.1 Girls’ education

Since 1381/2002 considerable progress has been made in increasing access to education for girls. In 1381/2002 official statistics for girls’ education showed that approximately 674,000 girls were enrolled in general education (EIP) compared to approximately 2.8 million in 1390/2011. As illustrated in Figure 2, girls’ enrolment declines in each year with a steeper drop in enrolment between Grades 4 and 5, Grades 7 and 8 and again between Grades 10 and 11. At the primary level, girls make up approximately 40% of total enrolment, whereas at the lower and upper secondary levels girls comprise approximately 35% and 34% of the total enrolment, respectively.



In both the National Education Strategic Plan 2010-2014 (NESP-2) and the National Education Interim Plan 2011-2013 (EIP) girls’ education is identified as a priority and several initiatives are planned in order to increase girls’ enrolment and retention (see Table 6).

Table 6. Strategies and actions to promote girls’ education included in the EIP.

Strategies and actions for girls' education	Progress in 1390
<i>Program 1 – General and Islamic education</i>	
Campaign for girls’ education	This campaign was part of the public awareness programs that were conducted in 1390 with parents, community members and elders.
Reduce walking distance by establishing more primary schools	In 1390, 619 new schools were established.
Recruitment and relocation of qualified female teachers to rural girls’ schools	Over 4,000 new female teachers were hired in 1390. With assistance from AusAid, the Ministry of Education began implementing a program to recruit and relocate female teachers to rural areas. If women teachers relocate to rural areas with their husbands they are eligible for an additional incentive of approximately \$500 per month and their husbands receive \$300 per month (\$400 if the husband works in the school). According to the Department of Planning and Evaluation 16 female teachers were recruited under this program in 1390.
Establishment of CBE and accelerated learning classes	As noted in the Access section more than 7,000 community based outreach classes were operational in 1390. More than 124,000 girls (or 57% of the CBE total enrollment) attended these classes in 32

<p>Construction of boundary walls and water and sanitation facilities for girls' schools</p>	<p>provinces.</p> <p>In 1390, 27 boundary walls were erected for existing schools. In addition toilets and potable water facilities were provided for 208 schools. As discussed in the Access section, this area is behind target. As boundary walls and water and sanitation facilities are critical for girls' access to education, additional attention is needed for this area in upcoming years.</p>
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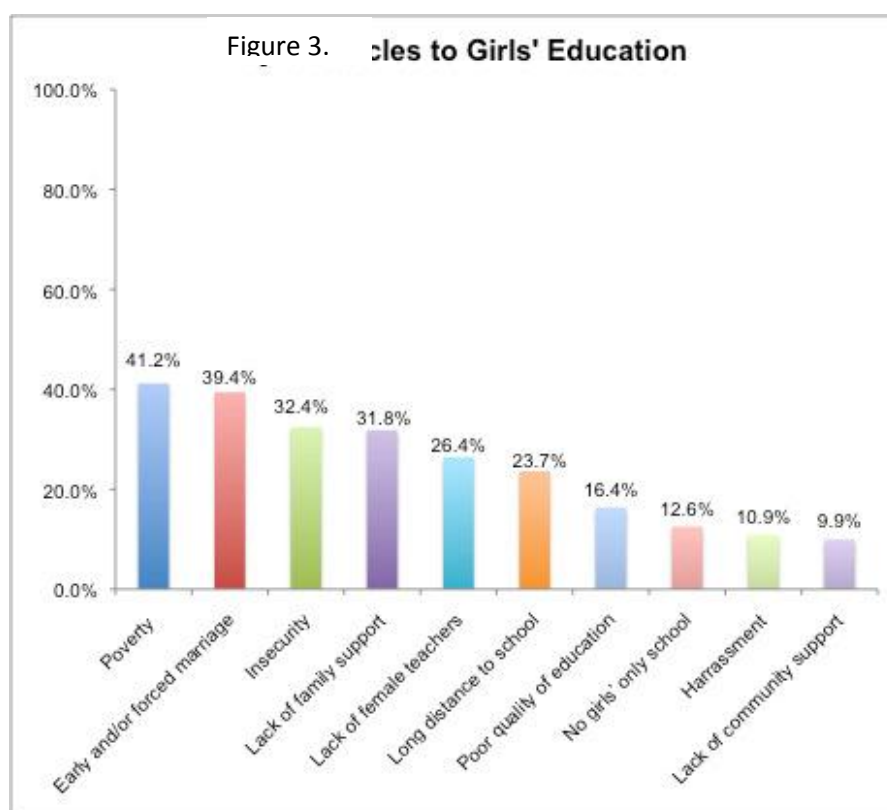
<p>Strategies and actions for girls' education</p>	<p>Progress in 1390</p>
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Program 2 – Curriculum development and teacher education

<p>Establishment of district teacher training support centers to bring training opportunities closer to female teachers</p>	<p>A recent review of the District Teacher Training Team (DT3) - a component of the National Program for In-Service Teacher Training - found that "DT3 offices are established in all provincial centers, in some provinces even in each district" (Mansory, 2011). In others fewer centers have been established in the districts. For example, in Zabul province only 20% of the district DT3 centers had been established in 1390. Insecurity outside the provincial centers was mentioned as the reason. The report also noted that "in some insecure areas, for example in Helmand, functional schools and other educational activities are available only around the center; hence there is no need for DT3 where no school is functioning."</p>
<p>Recruitment of more female faculty to support teacher education</p>	<p>The number of female faculty members in the Teacher Education Department increased from 244 in 1389 to 404 in 1390 (an increase of 160 female teacher educators). As of 1390, women accounted for 21% of the faculty members in the Teacher Education Department (compared to 19% in 1389).</p>
<p>Provision of incentives to female teacher education students from remote areas</p>	<p>In 1390, 2,766 female education students were contracted to receive scholarships to attend teacher training colleges (TTCs) through EQUIP (World Bank, 2011).</p>
<p>Upgrading of qualifications of female teachers</p>	<p>See the section on teacher education below. A critical issue here is the creation of a professional development system with a career ladder. As of 1390 a policy had been drafted but not yet adopted.</p>
<p>Mainstreaming gender awareness and sensitization in the curriculum and textbooks</p>	<p>New textbooks for grades 7-9, including lessons on human rights and gender, were printed and distributed. In addition chapters on these topics were also written for the textbooks for Grades 10-12.</p>

Strategies and actions for girls' education	Progress in 1390
<i>Program 5 – Education governance and administration</i>	
Development of gender sensitive policies, strategies, plans and M&E system	Little progress in 1390; a Director for Girls' Education was hired at the end of 1390.
Recruitment of more female staff	In 1390 an additional 4,476 female teachers were employed by the Ministry. The proportion of female teachers in General Education, however, remained unchanged at 31% of all teachers.
Provision of additional incentives for female staff to work in rural areas	As above

In 2010 a joint research project on girls' education was conducted by 16 civil society organisations and NGOs³ (Jackson 2011). The research findings indicated several key obstacles to girls' education as illustrated in Figure 3.



The strategies and actions identified in Table 6 address many of these challenges. For example, recruiting additional female teachers, especially for the higher grades, will allow girls to stay in

school longer. While there has been some progress in retaining girls in the secondary grades – 45,000 girls graduated from Grade 12 in 1390 compared to 32,000 in 1389 – significant investments are still needed with regard to increasing both the number of female teachers and the number of girls' secondary schools. In 1390 there were no qualified female teachers in 230 districts (or 56% of all districts in the country). This affects both access to and quality of education. With regard to access, in particular, the shortage of female teachers combined with the shortage of girls' secondary

³ The research (Jackson 2011) was published by Oxfam and jointly designed and carried out by the following organizations: Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF), Afghan Development Association (ADA), Afghan Peace and Democracy Act (APDA), Afghan Women's Network (AWN), Afghan Women Services and Education Organization (AWSE), All Afghan Women's Union (AAWU), CARE, Cooperation Centre for Afghanistan (CCA), Coordination of Afghan Relief (CoAR), Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA), Education Training Center for Poor Women and Girls of Afghanistan (ECW), Legal and Cultural Services for Afghan Women and Children (LCSAWC), Oxfam, Sanayee Development Organization (SDO), Shuhada and Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA).

schools means that no girls are enrolled in upper secondary grades in 159 districts (or 39% of all districts) (MoE, 2011c).

In addition to the strategies and actions identified in Table 6, MoE and UNICEF have also been working to increase access through the provision of school supplies to over three million primary school students. This activity lessens the cost of education for parents, thereby enabling more children to attend school. Similarly the food assistance provided by WFP encourages families living in poverty to send their children to school. In 1390 WFP helped provide food assistance to more than 2.8 million primary school students as well as girls in secondary school. According to WFP, slightly over one million primary school girls received take home rations and/or school meals and approximately 18,000 girls in secondary school received take home rations. According to the Director of Basic Education, parents are supposed to sign a contract stipulating that if children do not come to school during the month, they will be ineligible to receive the food distribution the following month.

4.2.2 Education for Kuchi children

One of the vulnerable groups identified through the Inclusive and Child Friendly Education Working Group was Kuchi (or nomadic) children. Migrant populations always face challenges in receiving education. So also in Afghanistan. The simple dilemma is that schools are often perceived as demanding a permanent site, and the construction of a building in which schooling can take place, but nomadic populations are often unable, or at times unwilling, to reside in one place for any great length of time due to the very nature of their livelihood.

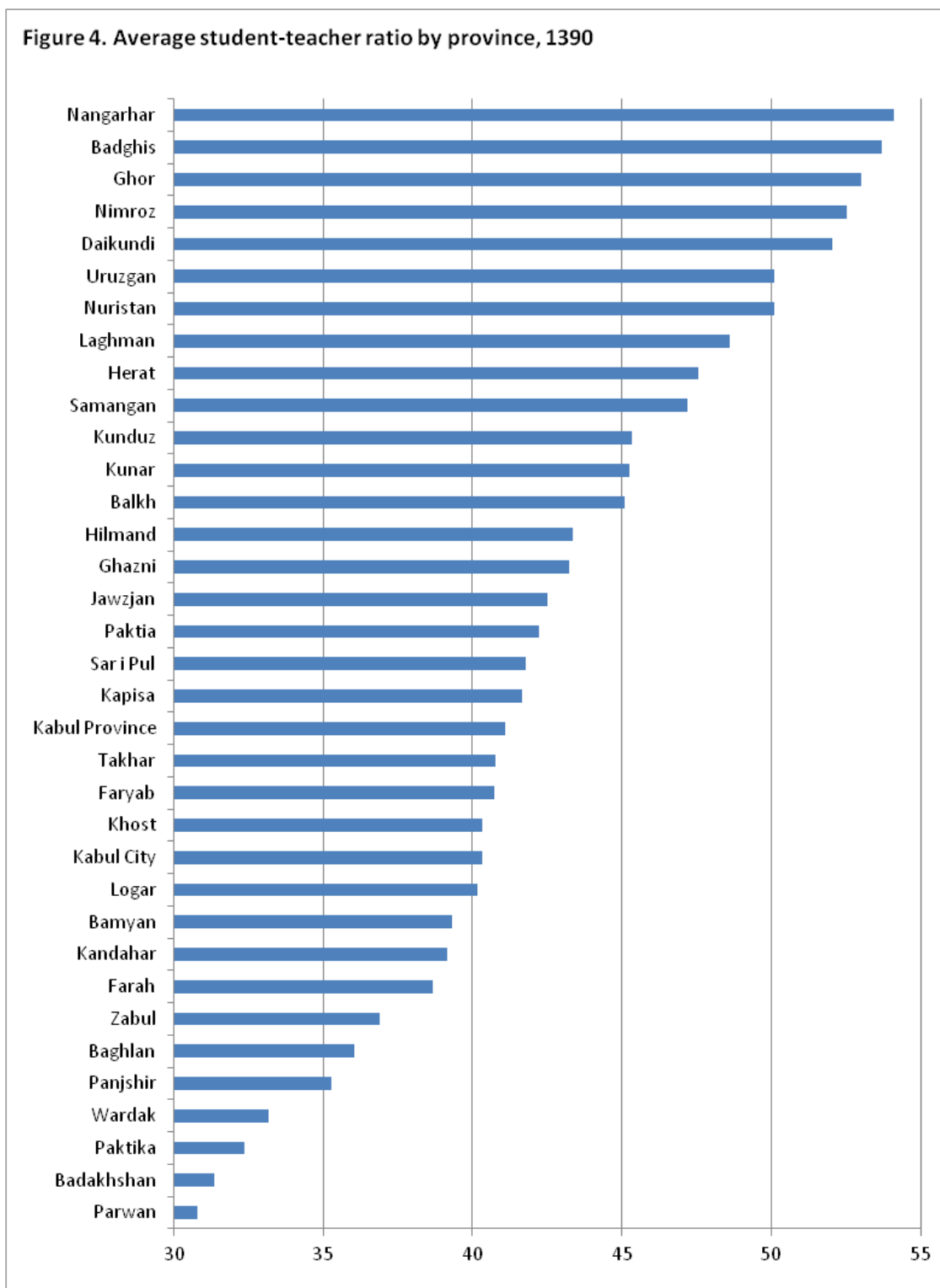
The Afghan Independent Directorate of Kuchi Affairs (IDKA) estimates the Kuchi population between 2 and 3 million. Because of the inherent difficulties associated with planning for schools when the population size is unknown, the government constructs schools on request from communities. In 1390, according to the Establishment Unit of DoPE, three schools were established for Kuchis, one school in each of the provinces of Logar, Faryab and Badghis. The permanent construction schools that are established for Kuchis are in areas where the Kuchis reside permanently and maintain homes. For the Kuchi families who travel seasonally, the schools and teachers move with their families.

The CBE classes of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) are another example of a program for Kuchi children. There is no construction of buildings, all schools are in tents and all teachers are Kuchi. Though the Kuchi population is nomadic, the treks are with intervals where a tribe can stay for six months in one place. In the Afghan education system, a full day of school for primary school children is officially four hours but in crowded areas the school day is closer to three hours especially when shifts are used. Schooling for Kuchis often consists of longer days, thus the Kuchi children get through the nine-month school cycle in less time. SCA has education programmes for Kuchis in Kunduz, Ghazni, Paktika and Jalalabad serving an estimated 6,400 children (53% girls). SCA plans to use the government's accelerated learning programme beginning in 2013.

Provincial disparities in access to education

Partly due to Afghanistan's geography and the lack of overall infrastructure, including transportation networks, provincial disparities exist in terms of education as well as other services. In its most recent survey, the Asia Foundation (2011: 61) found that "There are significant regional variations in satisfaction with public services and infrastructure. In the Central/Kabul (82%) and Central/Hazarajat (82%) regions more than four fifths of respondents say the availability of education for children is

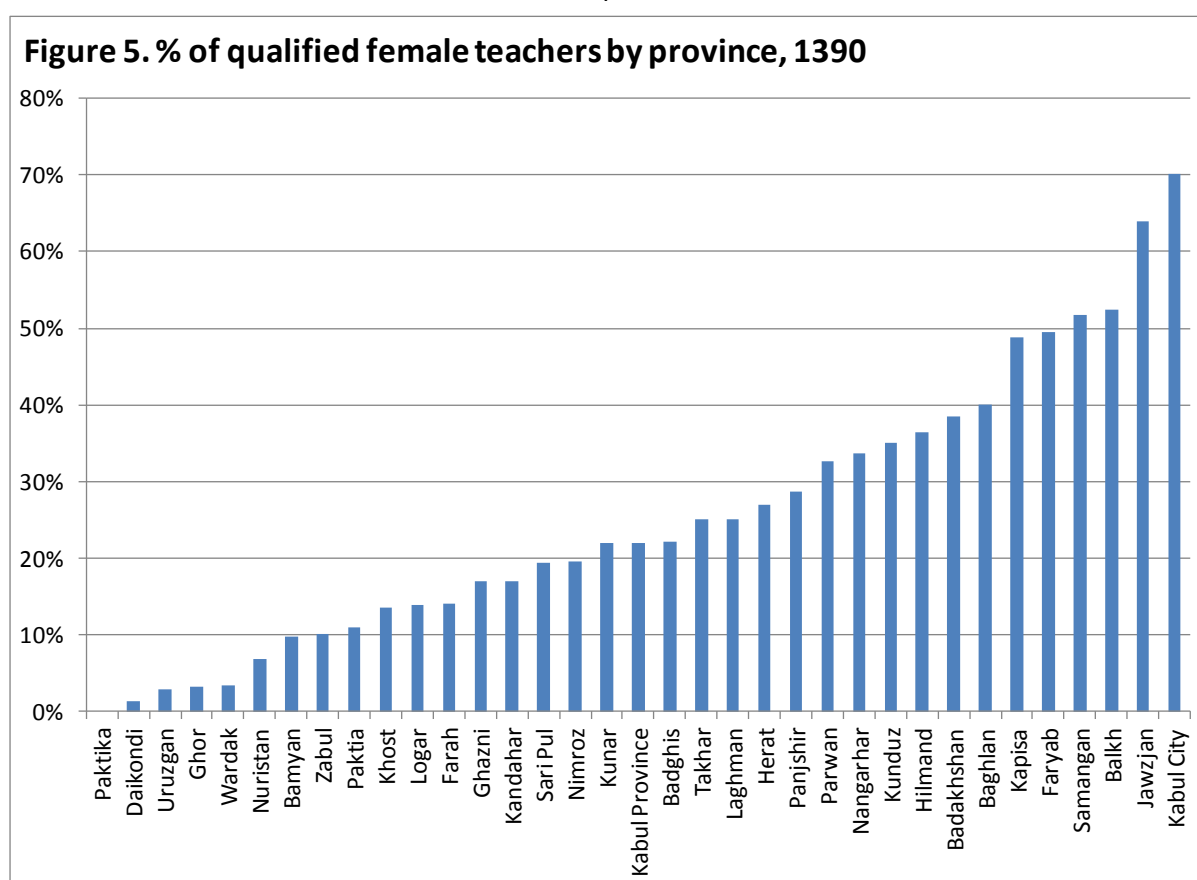
good or very good in their local area. This percentage decreases, however, to 76% of respondents in the North East, 74% in the North West, 73% in the East, 70% in the South East, 69% in the West and just over half of respondents in the South West (58%). The EIP reported provincial disparities in terms of the number of classrooms per student, qualified teachers and female teachers. In 1390 these disparities continue to exist. Data are not currently available on all of these indicators and should be included as part of the next education sector review.



Some of the existing data show, for example, that the average student-teacher ratio varies significantly among different provinces from a high of 54 in Nangarhar to 31 in Parwan. See Figure 4. Similarly the percentage of qualified female teachers (those with Grade 14 TTC or higher) varies considerably by province from no qualified teachers in Paktika to 70% in Kabul City. See Figure 5.

The proposed GPE Programme for 1391 focuses exclusively on disadvantaged districts in 13 provinces. The districts were identified based on low education indicators (particularly in relation to gender), difficult access (rural, remote, underserved, low economic indicators) and insecure conditions. If realized the GPE programme might therefore address some of the inequities in the education system but additional emphasis will be required throughout the education system in order to make the system more equitable for all children in the country.

T



4.3 Quality

In its most recent survey the Asia Foundation (2011: 5) reported that "The government's performance is judged most positively with regard to the provision of basic public services such as education (85% say the government is doing a good job)." In addition 26% of respondents cited a "better education system" as the most important achievement of the central government in the past two years. While this is very good news for MoE, there is also an expectation that the system will continue to progress in the coming year as 84% of respondents expect to see improvement in the availability of education for children. Undoubtedly, as access to education continues to expand, there will also be increased demand for improved quality of education.

According to World Bank and related research, the crucial variable in economic returns to education is its quality. Yet, quality takes 20-30 years for a nation to develop and requires substantive funding

and will to make the right reforms. Teachers are a crucial factor in quality but the literature is inconclusive about what exactly makes a good quality teacher. Institutional factors that are believed to increase educational quality are strong accountability systems that accurately measure student performance and increased local autonomy at the school level.

Students' learning achievements are a central purpose of the educational system and, as such, represent a key indicator of overall educational quality. Because the education system in Afghanistan was decimated in the 1990s and has expanded at a rapid pace in the last ten years, however, the quality of inputs is also a critical consideration in this context. Therefore this section will include a discussion of key inputs such as teacher qualifications and training, quality of physical school buildings and classrooms, and availability of textbooks and other learning materials, as well as a discussion of learning outcomes.

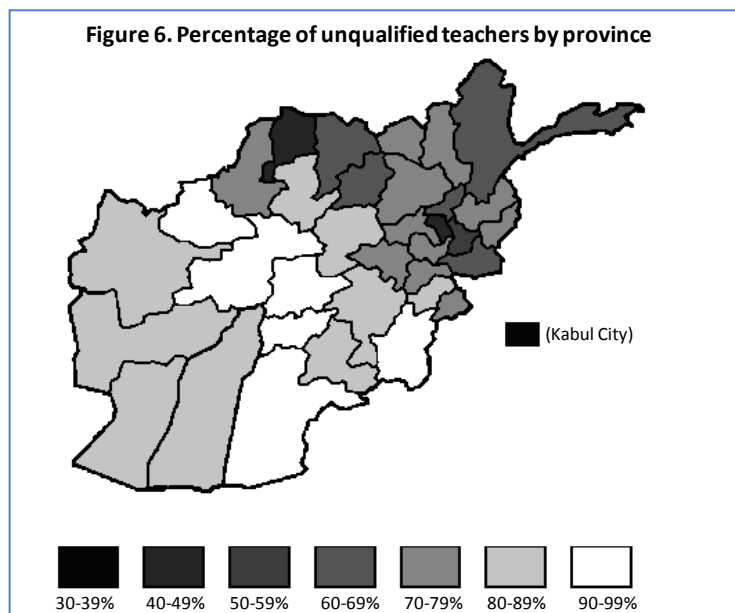
4.3.1 Teachers

As discussed earlier, the quality of teaching is a critical variable in overall educational quality. Commonly used measures such as teaching experience, teacher education, or required minimum certification standards, however, do not always closely relate to actual teaching ability in the classroom. In general, however, better educated teachers who have mastered the subject matter and teachers with strong pedagogical skills are able to help their students achieve better learning outcomes. Even teachers with strong pedagogical skills, however, will be less effective when classes are over-crowded. As discussed earlier the average student-teacher ratio in 1390 of 42:1 is higher than the Ministry's standard of 35:1. Ultimately this will have long-term detrimental outcomes, especially for children in the early primary grades who need more time and attention from their teachers in order to become functionally literate and learn basic skills such as reading, writing and simple mathematics. Since enrolment will continue to increase over the planning period, it is essential that the issue of the number of teachers is addressed in order to reduce the student-teacher ratio and class sizes, especially for young children. While this is largely an issue of education financing and the budget allotment for new teachers, it also requires strong commitment to rationalization and deployment of teachers to the areas of greatest need. It is also an issue related to the availability of qualified teachers. In 1390, 16,485 people graduated from the pre-service teacher training program of the Teacher Education Department (TED) and according to MoHE approximately 2,000 others graduated from university faculties of education. This is a sufficient pool from which to recruit new teachers with the minimum qualifications (i.e. Grade 14 graduate). Some concerns have been raised, however, with regard to whether teacher education students (from either TTCs or university) go on to become teachers after they graduate. Research on this issue is needed in order to determine whether resources devoted to teacher education are being used effectively.

Another issue raised during 1390 concerned the recruitment of contract teachers at the provincial level. There were anecdotal reports that less qualified individuals were hired rather than hiring the new graduates or more qualified individuals. Teachers interviewed during the school visits also expressed concern about the transparency of the teacher recruitment procedures, the lack of clarity and inadequacy of the 'pay and grade' system and the need for merit-based appointment of teachers. The Ministry took steps to address this issue in 1391 by sending staff from Kabul to supervise the process of teacher recruitment in order to ensure that the most qualified teachers were hired. The process in 1391 also included an examination that was administered to applicants.

The Ministry should continue to follow up on teacher recruitment to ensure that the most qualified individuals are being hired in order to help improve the quality of education.

In addition to the total number of teachers available, the qualifications and quality of existing teachers continue to be a concern. In 1390 MoE estimated that 68% of general education teachers (or approximately 117,000 teachers) did not meet the minimum standard qualifications for trained professional teachers. Figure 6 shows the percentage of unqualified teachers in each province (see also Annex 2). Of these unqualified teachers approximately 33,000 – or nearly 20% of the teaching force – had not even completed Grade 12.



Considering the overall literacy rate in the country and the competition for qualified human resources, the Ministry of Education will have to continue for many years to upgrade the skills of most of its existing teaching force in addition to hiring more teachers to meet the increasing demand for education. One of the EIP general objectives for 2013 is the development of a continuous professional development system, including a teacher career ladder. This objective is being supported through EQUIP and CIDA and is an essential activity based on the current qualifications of the teaching force. In 1390 TED started the development of a framework and began working with the World University Service of Canada on the Teacher Accreditation and Certification program.

While the overall system for continuous professional development has not yet been developed, TED has been implementing in-service training programs for several years with support from EQUIP and the USAID-funded Building Education Support Systems for Teachers (BESST) project. The first two teacher training packages INSET-1 and INSET-2 focus on general pedagogy and teaching methods for all subjects in grades 1-12 and together comprise approximately 24 days of training time. TED estimates that by mid-1391 all teachers will have completed INSET-1 and INSET-2. In addition TED has developed two additional INSET packages. INSET-3 focuses on content with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy for the primary grades and humanities and sciences for Grades 7-9. INSET-4 focuses on advanced pedagogy, lesson planning and conducting student assessments.

In addition to the INSET training packages for teachers, TED has also developed two training packages for school managers (SMT-1 and SMT-2). The first training for school managers focused on basic issues of school management and leadership while the second training is based on the MoE "Competencies for School Administrators".⁴ SMT-2 training covers 13 of the 50 competencies for school managers that have been identified and agreed by the Ministry. Through EQUIP, TED is also developing two more school management trainings (SMT-3 and SMT-4) that will cover the remaining competencies and will also include increased emphasis on academic supervision so that principals

⁴ These competencies were produced and agreed as part of the BESST project and outlined in the document "School Management and Educational Leadership in Afghanistan: Competencies Framework and Performance Standards for School Administrators" (2009).

are able to fulfil their administrative as well as academic leadership responsibilities. Table 7 shows the number of teachers and principals trained during 1390 in the various in-service packages offered by TED.

Table 7. Teachers and school managers trained through in-service programs.

Training package	Teachers and school managers trained in 1390			Total trained since inception of the activities		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
INSET-1	5,052	1,045	6,097	109,961	46,742	156,703
INSET-2	47,831	19,676	67,507	92,583	36,925	129,508
INSET-3				21,484	-	21,484
SMT-1	264	43	307	10,047	628	10,675
SMT-2	5,807	355	6,162	5,900	367	6,267
SMT-3	15,628	5,649	21,277	15,628	5,649	21,277

Source: MoE, Teacher Education Department.

In order to address the challenge of the teachers with less than a 12th grade education TED has also developed an Accelerated Learning Program for Teachers (ALPT). The objective of this program is to upgrade the teaching qualifications of teachers who have completed grade 6 but not grade 12 by providing intensive, short term courses under the supervision of trained subject specialist teachers. As part of the design of the program, teachers who complete grade 12 through the accelerated program would then be eligible to enter a Teacher Training College. According to TED more than 17,000 teachers registered for this program but TED was unable to initiate it due to lack of funding. The viability and necessity of this program should be re-considered by TED and partners during the development of the career ladder framework. In some provinces it may be critical in the medium-term to retain all existing teachers and upgrade their skills and qualifications, especially in more remote areas of the country.

It is clear that the development of a system of continued professional development is a priority. Such a system must provide repeated opportunities for teachers to upgrade their skills. Teachers and principals interviewed during the review process commonly mentioned that the INSET trainings they had attended were not sufficient for them. Either they received the training too late (e.g. two to three months after the start of the school year so they did not know about the new curriculum) or the training did not elaborate on the new curriculum and how best to teach it. They also mentioned that the INSET trainers were inadequately prepared to deliver the training and did not have full grasp of the subject matter themselves. In addition, as discussed in the section on learning outcomes below, as expected there is little evidence that one or two short interventions are having a significant effect on students' learning achievements. In order to have more impact the in-service trainings must build upon each other and there must be increased coordination between TED and the Curriculum Department to ensure that the new curriculum is fully integrated into the trainings offered by TED.

4.3.2 National Teacher Competency Test

According to the goal set in both ANDS and EIP, 70% of teachers will pass a teacher competency test. Beginning in 1388 TED started administration of this test. As of 1390 more than 175,000 teachers had taken the test and according to MoE more than 90% passed. See Table 8 for a summary.

Table 8. Number of teachers taking the national teacher competency test

Year	Male	Female	Total
1390	35,292	11,251	46,543
1388-1389	82,045	46,517	128,562
Total	117,337	57,768	175,105

Source: Teacher Education Department "Semi Annual Progress Report", January 2012.

This is a somewhat paradoxical result considering that 68% of teachers have Grade 12 education or less. According to NESP-2, the aim is to "administer regularly the teacher competency tests to increase the rank and level of salaries for teachers and school administrators." More analysis is needed to determine the relationship between the test and actual teacher competencies. If there is a strong relationship then the results should be factored into the in-service training program in order to focus on areas where teachers show the greatest weaknesses.

4.3.3 Schools and classrooms

Physical infrastructure alone will not result in quality education but spaces that are conducive to learning will help improve the overall quality of education. In schools with buildings a recent EQUIP II review found that many did not have all of the basic facilities that are needed (World Bank, 2011). In a survey of 1,424 schools conducted by the Infrastructure Services Department (ISD), in connection with the EQUIP II review, 1,166 schools (80% of the total surveyed) were lacking boundary walls, 282 schools (20%) had no electricity and 1,326 schools (93%) had no garbage collection points. In addition a 2010 independent review of recently constructed schools found that 41% of the sampled schools⁵ had poor sanitation facilities, while 4% had no toilets at all; 80% had no hand washing facilities and 52% had no drinking water supply (Article 25, 2011). Boundary walls are especially important for girls' schools as parents are more willing to send their girls to school if there is a proper boundary wall. The water and sanitation issues are also very significant as improper facilities pose a health risk and because lack of these facilities reduces attendance, especially of girls.

Based on their analysis, Article 25 (2011) recommended the following to improve the quality of schools and classrooms that are constructed in the future:

- (a) Community participation in school design and construction improves construction quality, value for money, and disaster risk reduction. Article 25 noted that this is more of an option in rural areas than in urban settings because bigger, more complex schools are often needed in urban settings. Schools that were constructed by the community or with the participation of the community were of higher quality than others sampled. Community participation is a key feature of EQUIP II which supports construction either through National Competitive Bidding or Community Contracting. Through the Community Contracting approach which focuses on simple structures managed by communities, EQUIP II can support the construction of many more schools (246 as of December 2011) compared to the larger, more

⁵ Article 25 sampled 54 schools constructed by various education providers (including MoE) in various provinces.

technically complicated schools that are built through the National Competitive Bidding process (25 schools as of December 2011). In addition to the benefits of increased community ownership of the schools the Community Contracting approach is more efficient as it is not subject to all of the same bureaucratic requirements as schools that are constructed using the National Competitive Bidding process.

- (b) Monitoring and quality control should be strengthened among all education providers. This was a key finding of both the World Bank review and the Article 25 review. To strengthen monitoring and quality control within MoE, ISD hired engineers on the super-scale system in order to pay more competitive wages for engineers with at least five years of experience. ISD has hired 100 engineers (compared to two engineers in 1389) which will help improve its monitoring capacity.
- (c) The standard MoE school design is not child-friendly and often uncomfortable; UNICEF's Child-Friendly Schools Manual offers guidance on design which will improve education quality.
- (d) Locally procured materials and locally adapted designs work better than e.g. prefabricated designs relying on (often poor-quality) concrete.

In addition to the issues raised regarding quality of construction in both the EQUIP II and Article 25 reviews there is an on-going and increasing need for improving the budget and attention to operations and maintenance of the schools with buildings. According to the recent EQUIP mid-term review, "A sound O&M [operations and maintenance] strategy must be put in place including specific activities, funding, roles and responsibilities, as well as training. It is hoped that the GPE funding proposal that has been approved would help address some of the O&M issues in the sector" (World Bank, 2011). ISD prepared a policy proposal regarding on-going maintenance that had not yet been approved by the end of 1390. Especially as new classrooms are constructed it will become imperative to have a policy in place and to allocate more funding for maintenance to protect the significant investments that have been made in constructing new schools and classrooms over the last few years.

4.3.4 Curriculum development, textbooks and other learning materials

As of the end of 1390 the curriculum for Grades 1-12 had been revised and all new textbooks were written and printed for General Education. This is a considerable accomplishment. The quality of the contents of the textbooks is reported to have improved though interviews conducted with teachers from four schools in Kabul City and three schools in Panjshir indicate that the materials in the secondary textbooks are significantly advanced compared to what children have previously studied in the elementary grades. In addition they noted the need for some corrections within the books when additional copies are printed and distributed. These same concerns have also been raised with regard to the primary education textbooks.

Critical challenges with regard to implementation of the curriculum still remain however. First the new curriculum has not been fully integrated into the in-service training packages of TED. More coordination is needed between TED and the Curriculum Department to ensure that teachers and teacher educators are familiar with the new curriculum and with the suggested methodologies for teaching. The Curriculum Department has been preparing Teacher Guides as one way to address this issue but these have not been distributed to all teachers or schools. As of 1390, the Teacher Guides for Grades 1-9 had been prepared and printed but not distributed to all teachers. The Curriculum Department estimates that the Teacher Guides for Grades 10-12 were approximately 90% complete at the end of 1390.

With regard to the overall process of increasing the quality and relevance of the curriculum the Ministry has started the next phase of updating/revising the curriculum. Since the textbooks for Grades 1-6 have been in use for four years, the Curriculum Department plans to revise the textbooks for Grades 1-3 in 1391 and Grades 4-6 in 1392. As part of this process the Curriculum Department conducted a survey in 1390 and interviewed school students, teachers, principals, head masters, parents, and school supervisors and monitors related to their use of the new Grade 1-3 textbooks. In general those interviewed agreed with about 80% of the new curriculum and textbooks. The Curriculum Department will therefore seek to make changes in line with the survey results. Those interviewed also commented on the problems they have encountered with regard to implementation and use of the new textbooks and curriculum. These include:

- Lack of regular supervision in the schools
- Over-crowded classes in some areas due to a shortage of classrooms and teachers. In some places class sizes reach 80-90 students and some schools operate as many as three shifts a day.
- High levels of teacher absenteeism
- Weak capacity building for the teachers and school supervisors
- Most of the teachers do not use daily lesson plans
- All students do not have access to textbooks, even in Kabul City
- Textbooks are not distributed on time
- Teacher guidebooks are not distributed to the teachers.
- Lack of professional teachers in the schools; most teachers are not familiar with new methods of teaching.
- Schools are not equipped with enough tables, chairs, teaching materials and health kits and also do not have good water and sanitation facilities.

4.3.5 Learning outcomes

In Afghanistan, a systematic process for monitoring students' performance does not yet exist. Instead examinations are routinely delivered twice a year - once at mid-year to check students' progress and again at the end of the school year in order to assess whether students met the learning objectives for their grade. These examinations are not standardized and instead are developed by individual teachers or within schools. In 1390 slightly more than 80% of all students took the end of year examinations and 95% of those students passed.

Another examination that is an indication of learning outcomes is the Kankor examination that is used for admission to universities throughout the country. This exam may be an imperfect indicator of educational quality, as admissions might also be constrained by available spaces. Still it is one additional proxy indicator of educational quality. According to MoE, nearly all Grade 12 graduates (99.8% of males and 90.7% of females) took the Kankor examination. Of these 30% of males and 19% of females (30,850 and 7,840, respectively) were admitted to the MoHE university system.

Finally a recent study (Mansory 2011) conducted by the Teacher Education Department (TED) looked at students' test results for language and mathematics in comparison to a baseline study conducted by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan in 2009.⁶ Mansory (2011) states that, "The aim of this

⁶ Students' test results in the TED study were compared to the results of a nearly identical test used in the SCA study which compared SCA model schools in 12 provinces to nearby government schools. The same 12 provinces were used in the 2011

comparison is to study whether children's learning achievements have changed, whether they have improved and if so, to what extent."

The results are shown in Table 9. As shown, the average scores for both grades and in both subjects have improved. Mansory (2011: 13) states that, "The difference is significant; more so in math than in language. The reported learning achievements measured by test scores in government schools have also exceeded the level of SCA's Model Schools. Whether this improvement is a result of improved teaching due to the training teachers have received or whether it is due to other factors or a combination cannot be explained by data from this study. Possibly, a combined effect of training and better conditions in school have been in action."

Table 9. 2011 language and math test results compared to results of the baseline study

Study year	Type of school	Average test results		Average test results	
		<i>Grade 3 students</i>		<i>Grade 6 students</i>	
		Language	Math	Language	Math
Result from SCA baseline study (2009)	Government schools	46	25	51	34
	SCA model schools	56	49	55	49
Result from the current study (2011) - only government schools	Government schools	58	51	57	46

Source: Amir Mansory, "A study of the DT3 program: Teaching quality and students' learning achievements, 2011.

Mansory (2011) also analysed Grade 3 students' test scores compared to their teachers' educational levels (see Table 10). Not surprisingly students who have teachers with an education of more than Grade 12 score higher on both math and language tests.

Table 10: Grade 3 students' test scores and their teachers' educational levels

Teacher Education Level	Students' average math test scores	Students' average language test scores
No formal education	52	41
Less than 12	49	58
Secondary	55	59
More than 12	64	73
Average	51	58

Source: Amir Mansory, "A study of the DT3 program: Teaching quality and students' learning achievements, 2011.

While examination results are the most often used indicator for assessing learning outcomes, in Afghanistan another indication of educational quality and learning outcomes may be related to the number of temporary and permanent absentees in the system. It is likely that these students have dropped out, perhaps because of family reasons or perhaps because they were not succeeding in

study conducted by TED. The main difference in the 2011 study was that the Grade 6 math test included four items from TIMSS.

school or were disappointed in the quality of education provided. In 1390 the number of absentees is shown in Table 10; the results are the same as for 1389, that is 19% of male students and 18% of female students were permanently or temporarily absent.

Table 10. Permanent and temporary absentees, 1390.

	Male				Female			
	Permanent	Temporary	Total	%	Permanent	Temporary	Total	%
General Education	672,175	169,557	841,732	19%	402,851	106,077	508,928	18%
Islamic Education	24,571	6,674	31,245	19%	3,261	1,063	4,324	15%

Source: EMIS statistics, 1390.

The TED study that looked at test results for students in Grades 3 and 6 indicates potential improvements in the quality of the education system over the last two years. Additional effort will be needed to systematize the process of assessing students' performance. The development of a national student assessment system is underway and supported by EQUIP and GIZ. In 2012, GIZ and the World Bank plan to work with the Ministry to conduct learning assessments in 13 provinces. According to the World Bank (2011), this will be the first comprehensive learning assessment using a standardized format that has been undertaken. The results will be used in the further development of a national student assessment system.

In addition the General Education Department is working to improve the system of monitoring and supervision of teachers, a process that also must be coordinated with TED. In 1390 the system was largely ineffective with regard to improving the quality of teachers as supervisors were more accustomed to "inspecting" schools and teachers than to supervising and helping teachers improve their performance. In 1391 the system is being upgraded, more supervisors will be added and they will also be trained to supervise and help improve the quality of teaching. In addition school managers have also attended some of the in-service training for teachers so that they will be better able to supervise and coach teachers in their schools.

4.4 Relevance

As discussed in the section on quality, the full curriculum review and update for Grades 1-12 has been completed. As part of this process, the textbooks were updated to include information related to priority issues such as the environment, health and narcotics, which are all topics of relevance within Afghanistan. The textbooks include information related to health and nutrition, water and sanitation, environmental management, resource management and various facets of ecology as well as messages warning about the dangers of narcotics usage.

In addition to the textbook revisions, MoE has worked in cooperation with other Ministries to address key challenges in Afghan society. For example, MoE has worked with the Ministry of Public Health to promote health and hygiene in schools through health awareness programs that have taught students the importance of personal health and hygiene. In addition, 77 health centres have been established in Kabul City and throughout Kabul province to address students' health needs at the centre. To expand the reach of these health services to the provinces, MoE trained 1,320 female

teachers and support staff on health and environmental issues including keeping the environment clean, and water and sanitation.

With regard to environmental education and promoting a greener environment MoE has worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and development partners to promote tree-planting campaigns. In 1390 thousands of trees were planted in and around the schools across the country.

The Ministry of Education has also worked with the Ministry of Counter Narcotics and the Ministry of Public Health to conduct awareness programs through schools, mosques, school councils (shuras), and mass media. These awareness campaigns inform youth about the hazards of drug use. In addition, special chapters have been added to the textbooks for grades 7-9 to raise awareness about drug use and the potential hazards to the individual's health and life as well as the harm it may cause to families and society as a whole.

In order to make education more relevant and accessible for children from minority groups, the Curriculum Department also developed textbooks for 48 subjects for grades 1-6 in the eight local languages of Uzbeki, Nooristani, Pashayee, Baluchi, Turkmany, Shighnani, Gujery and Wakhani. After completion, the textbooks were printed and will be distributed in 1391 for general education students. A recent visit to three schools in Faryab found that none of these textbooks had yet reached the schools.

The Education Sector Analysis conducted in 2010 raised the issue of relevance of the curricula with regard to the retention of girls. This is an issue that requires further attention during the planning period to make sure that future curriculum revisions specifically incorporate issues relevant to children and families throughout Afghanistan.

4.5 Management

The Education Interim Plan details strategic objectives and activities according to two principal areas: education administration development and strategic management development. Accordingly this review will examine progress in those areas.

4.5.1 Education Administration Development

Education administration development consists of a wide variety of issues including administrative reform and human resource development; information communication technology; and procurement, logistics, services and properties. Financial management is also a critical component and as such is discussed separately. EIP also lists construction of education infrastructure and security and protection, which have also been discussed separately in other sections of this report.

4.5.1.1 Administrative reform and human resource development

The Human Resources Department (HRD) has made significant advances over the last three years. One of its most significant achievements is with regard to implementation of the pay and grade process. As of the end of 1390 nearly 80% of MoE employees (197,606) have gone through the process, including 158,286 teachers, 7,175 administrative employees and 32,145 agirs⁷. This is ahead of MoE's target of 70% for 1390 and far surpasses the efforts of other ministries.

In addition HRD is also working to modernize its human resource systems. Currently all personnel files are available only in hard copy and not even filed to be easily accessible. This creates an extra burden especially since the Director of HRD reports that every day approximately 1,000 people from all over the country physically come to HRD for services, such as accessing their personnel file, asking for data in order to prepare for retirement, going through the pay and grade process and looking for

⁷ Agir employees are meant to occupy lower-skilled and manual labour posts (such as drivers, cooks, painters, etc.).

a job with MoE. This is an extraordinarily inefficient system and also means that teachers are traveling long distances in order to deal with personnel issues, which is time away from teaching.

Therefore HRD has started a process to improve its system. According to the Director three years ago the department did not have any computers. Now the central office is fully equipped. In 1390 HRD staff went through 183,000 personnel profiles and purchased filing cabinets in order to begin filing the employee records. During this process they discovered 38,000 files of personnel who had either retired or died. Because of the teacher registration database that was developed in 1388 HRD believes that the number of ghost teachers is not significant but they have sent letters to Provincial Education Departments inquiring about 6,600 potential ghost teachers for whom they have incomplete records.

HRD has also developed a database and started entering employee profiles electronically into the database. As of the end of 1390 approximately 35,000 personnel profiles had been entered into the system which records basic employee details such as the date hired, the employee's ID card number, education level, promotions, awards, punishments and training received. HRD's plan is to enter all the employee profiles at the central level and then to begin moving the system to the provincial level which will, in time, make the system more efficient.

HRD also has some responsibilities for capacity development of employees and has developed a Human Resources plan for the next four years that includes training/capacity development needs. Currently the department works with the Civil Service Commission to provide training. The Director stressed that although MoE employs 67% of all civil servants in the country the ministry does not have its own facility(ies) to train its staff. The department also suffers from a severe shortage of office space which was partially improved in 1390 by renting an additional building from the Afghan Red Crescent.

4.5.2 Information communication technology

The Ministry reports that the central offices and all provincial offices have been equipped with ICT equipment. In addition the process of computerizing district offices has started. While the provincial offices have received equipment problems still exist with regard to utilization of the equipment. First the provinces are more likely to suffer from unreliable electricity and poor internet connections. These problems can be partially averted through the provision of solar power systems and generators but the latter also require significant operational budgets for maintenance and fuel. Second fewer people in the provinces have received basic computer training. In 1390 the Ministry reports that only 53 staff received computer training. Addressing these issues (internet, power supply and training) will be critical especially as MoE moves toward more decentralization of key processes such as planning, EMIS, budgeting and procurement.

4.5.3 Procurement, logistics, services and properties

The main action related to procurement in the EIP is the development of a procurement database. According to the Procurement Department this database has been developed and is now in use for tracking and updating projects on a timely database - for both goods and services as well as construction. As part of the EQUIP process the Ministry is also responsible to develop a Procurement Manual which has not yet been completed. The issue of lack of documentation of procurement policies and procedures was also raised by a USAID pre-award assessment that was conducted by Ernst & Young (2011). That assessment rated MoE's procurement as an area that needed further monitoring.

In discussions with representatives from ISD and procurement there is a continuing need to make the process as efficient as possible. Some of the challenges that continue to arise include:

- Late delay in passage of the national budget - while this budget is essential for MoE to plan its projects, draft procurement plans can be prepared well in advance and then adjusted based on the final budget allocation to MoE.

- Misunderstandings related to MoF's requirements (specifications, drawings, etc.) for the procurement plan - any errors in the procurement requests from either MoE program managers or from MoE to MoF result in additional delays to an already lengthy process. (The Procurement Department estimates that it takes two-three months for a project to go through the entire process.) The Procurement Manual mentioned above should help resolve many of the issues.
- Lack of qualified vendors - The Ministry has taken steps to address this issue by starting a vendor registration process in 1390. When projects are announced and bids are not submitted by qualified vendors it adds extra delays as the projects have to be re-announced and the 21 day waiting period for accepting bids has to start over. A database of qualified vendors will improve the process but the USAID review (Ernst & Young, 2011) highlighted the need for documented criteria for the vendor approval and evaluation process as presently such documentation does not exist.
- Rigid use of "least cost" procurement criterion - According to the Director of ISD strict adherence to the "least cost" criterion creates significant challenges with regard to school construction. Per the Director small contractors who submit low bids and then are awarded the contracts simply stop work on projects when they run out of money. As of 1390 ISD has approximately 200 projects that are stopped because the contractors did not finish the work. It is a lengthy procedure to terminate the contracts and thus further delays completion of the schools and likely leads to an overall higher cost. According to representatives from the Procurement Department other criteria exist, including quality and the "lowest responsive bid" which is based on history and qualifications but to date MoE has only used the "least cost" criterion in order to ensure that all contracts successfully pass through the Control Section. MoE (Procurement, Control Section and ISD) should discuss this issue with MoF to determine an acceptable resolution.
- Centralization of procurement process - MoE and MoF are both working toward decentralizing more of the procurement process. According to the MoE Deputy Minister, Administration and Finance, MoE is in the process of assessing the capacity at the provincial level to undertake procurement processes. As of 1390 five provinces had been assessed. Decentralization has the potential to significantly improve the process and increase transparency at the local level but also carries some dangers. The ISD Director stated that decentralization will make the process faster and that hiring contractors from the area where projects will be completed will also minimize the risk that the contractors will not complete the projects since they are known in the community. He also stated that the potential for corruption may be greater which is a concern that must be addressed in terms of capacity development for procurement and ISD staff in the provinces.
- Length of time of procurement process - Staff from the Procurement Department stated that if "everything goes perfectly" it takes three months for projects to go through the procurement process. Considering the Ministry's massive needs for new infrastructure projects over the coming years completion of the procurement plan on a timely basis is critical to ensuring that projects can be started efficiently and in consideration of the available construction seasons.

A new addition to the procurement process in 1390 is that all announcements must be sent to the *Afghani Land* government newspaper. MoE's experience in 1390 is that sometimes the newspaper does not even publish the bid announcement for 20 days after receipt from MoE which further lengthens the process. MoE should discuss this requirement with MoF in order to either change the requirement or find an alternative way of ensuring that the government, through newspaper or web-site, will publish the bid announcements on an accelerated basis.

4.5.4 Strategic Management Development

This area of the EIP focuses on policy development and revision as well as strategic and operational planning; EMIS, monitoring, evaluation and reporting; grants management and control and audit. During 1390 steps were taken to strengthen the Academic Council by establishing it as a new directorate to support research and policy development in the country.

4.5.4.1 Strategic and operational planning

The Department of Planning and Evaluation (DoPE) continues its work with regard to decentralizing the planning process. In 1390 in consultation with programme staff and Provincial Education Departments, DoPE drafted provincial and district level operational plans. In addition the Department conducted introductory educational planning trainings for 452 planning officers from Provincial Education Departments (PEDs) and 161 planning officers from Districts Education Offices (DEOs). These trainings were followed later in the year with more intensive (two-week) trainings on how to prepare operational plans and progress reports that were conducted for 321 staff from PEDs, 65 staff from DEOs and 33 planning officers from central departments. DoPE plans to continue the capacity development of both provincial and district staff with regard to operational as well as strategic planning.

4.5.4.2 EMIS, monitoring, evaluation and reporting

The EMIS Directorate has made great progress over the last five years. Each year a school survey is conducted and analyzed and the results made available on the MoE website which by itself is an achievement. Still the overall process can be improved and there are challenges yet to be addressed. As noted in the recent World Bank review (2011) the EMIS process is still heavily dependent on processing at the central level primarily due to problems with internet connectivity and electricity at the decentralized levels. The review also noted that "Paper movement of data from provinces to Kabul has also resulted in inaccuracies in the data leading to inaccurate indicators" (World Bank, 2011: 10).

The paper movement of data also greatly lengthens the time needed to process all the school survey data each year. MoE is under discussion with the Government of India for support (financial and technical) for addressing the EMIS needs of the Ministry. As part of this support the overall process of conducting and analyzing the school surveys should be reviewed. Currently the school survey data are collected at the end of the school year which places enormous pressure on the EMIS Directorate to produce information for year-end review reports. If the school surveys were conducted earlier in the academic year there would be more time for entering and cleaning the data. In addition the process as it has existed for the last four years relies almost entirely on surveys completed by head teachers. In future years it may be worthwhile for MoE to also consider a sampling process whereby school survey results are physically cross-checked for accuracy.

The EMIS system currently produces a good supply of educational statistics related to student enrolment, absenteeism, examination results and teacher qualifications, for example. As noted in the 2010 Education Sector Analysis, however, there has been an on-going need for an agreed upon list of indicators for use in monitoring progress of implementation. A list has been finalized with the World Bank for use with EQUIP and can potentially be used or added to with regard to the Ministry's other objectives under the EIP.

One of the critical issues with regard to educational data relates to the calculation of key educational indicators such as gross and net enrolment ratios. These indicators depend on accurate estimates of the school age population which are not currently available in Afghanistan making it nearly impossible to measure progress toward Education for All and Millennium Development Goals. In addition to the lack of reliable population data, calculating these ratios also depends on the Ministry's ability to collect age-related data for all children who are enrolled in school. MoE will need to review its own systems for collecting and tracking age-related data and will also need to advocate with the Central Statistical Office and Parliament for better population figures. In addition

MoE can also incorporate other data sources into its system, such as information produced through other surveys such as the MICS, which is supported by UNICEF and conducted with the Central Statistical Office. The MICS includes data on education and literacy as well as a range of indicators on the circumstances and well-being of children.

With regard to monitoring and reporting the EMIS Directorate continued to improve its reporting procedures during 1390 and held several workshops at the end of the year with provincial and district level officials in order to improve their reporting capabilities. The EMIS Directorate currently has five-six national TAs in each province who are monitoring and reporting specialists. Each month they are responsible for visiting different districts and reporting on implementation of operational plans. As this system is not sustainable continued capacity development will be needed with provincial and district staff to improve their monitoring and reporting capabilities.

4.5.4.3 Grants management unit

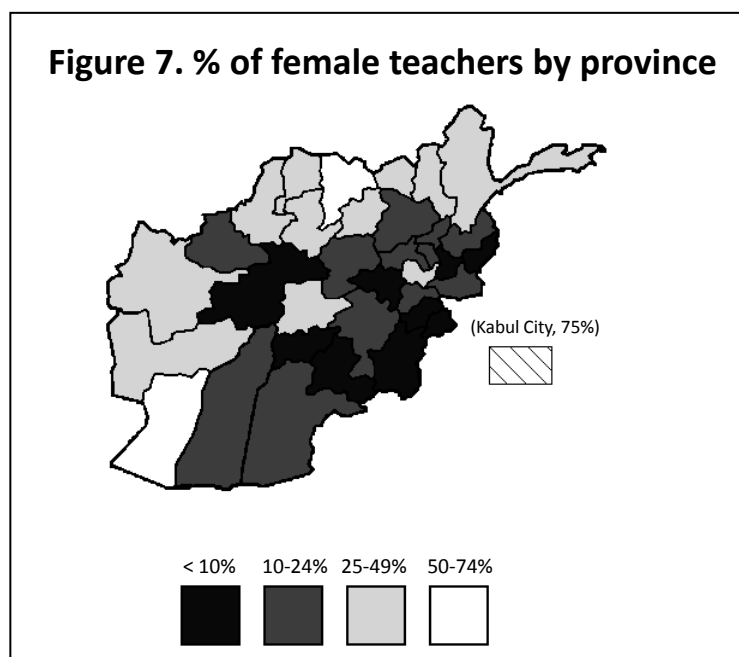
The Grants Management Unit was re-established in 1388 (2009) and has as its responsibilities to fundraise with donors for activities that are aligned with EIP and NESP-2. The GMU is also responsible for donor coordination and donor mapping. The Ministry of Finance maintains an overall donor assistance database for the country and the GMU has another database that contains donor profiles. In 1390 the GMU requested donors to report on their assistance to MoE. As of July 2011, only 13 donors had responded to the GMU's request although the GMU reports that approximately 25 donors are assisting MoE.

GMU staff reports that coordinating data among line departments is one of the challenges that arise because departments go directly to donors with their requests rather than coordinating through GMU. There is a need for increased coordination both within departments of the Ministry as well as with donors to ensure that assistance is targeted to the Ministry's priorities as specified in EIP and NESP-2. To do this may require a more active approach to donor mapping.

5 Female Teachers

As discussed above the shortage of female teachers is a key obstacle to girls' education, especially for girls to continue their education beyond about Grade 4. Female teachers with sound pedagogical skills and content knowledge will be one of the key factors that determine whether Afghanistan will achieve the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals and live up to its vision of providing equitable access to quality education for all.

More female teachers in the work force will also help contribute to more equitable educational outcomes for men and women with the same level of education. Presently female teachers make up 31% of the teaching cadre in General Education (and only 5% in Islamic Education); however, this percentage varies significantly by province (see Figure 7 and Annex 3). In Paktika Province, for example, only 16 of 3,111 general education teachers are women. Only one of those 16 teachers even graduated from Grade 12, while the rest have either some secondary education (10 teachers) or have only completed primary school (five teachers). In Kabul City, on the other hand, nearly 75% of general education teachers are women and 70% of those have Grade 14 or higher education.⁸ Besides Kabul City, only two provinces have more than 50% female teachers - Balkh (53% women, of whom 52% are qualified) and Nimroz (54% are women but only 20% of them have Grade 14 or higher). The presence of



female teachers is also strongly correlated with girls' enrollment in secondary education⁹. As such there is a clear and pressing need for more female teachers throughout the country, especially in remote and rural areas.

5.1 Challenges

There are multiple challenges with regard to increasing the number of female teachers, especially in rural areas. These include:

- Existing low educational levels of women throughout the country but especially in rural areas
- Teacher salaries not competitive
- Keeping girls in school
- Attracting women from rural areas to the teaching profession
- Attracting existing female teachers to rural areas

⁸ This is not necessarily positive, however, as the high percentage of female teachers in Kabul City may also be an indication that teaching is one of the few economic opportunities available to well-educated women and that other higher-paying opportunities are available for men.

⁹ The correlation between the overall percentage of female teachers by province to enrolment of girls in lower secondary education is 0.70 and for upper secondary the correlation between female teachers and girls' enrolment is 0.74. The correlations would probably be even stronger if girls' enrolment by province was compared specifically to the percentage of female secondary teachers for each province but data on the latter are not available.

Portrait of two female teachers illustrated/recorded during the Panjsher field visit:

In 1390, two female teachers in Panjsher province walked for hours every day to teach at a girls' high school. The two teachers came from Jabul Saraj, which is one of the main districts in the adjacent Parwan province. They both were graduates of a teacher training college in Science. The school where they taught was located in a mountainous area in Shotol district. Shotol is a district outside the main Panjsher valley (but still part of the province) and is accessed via dirt roads that pass over the hills. According to the Provincial Education Director, the two teachers walked together every day for more than one and a half hours each way to get to the school and to return home in Jabul Saraj. This continued for one year until the teachers could no longer navigate the rough terrain and the long distance. Potential harassment on the way by men and security were other fears that the teachers expressed. The teachers were committed to continue teaching at the same school if some basic facilities such as transport could be provided but, as the Ministry of Education was unable to assist with any transport, the teachers were unable to continue at the girls' school in Shotol. According to the PED, this was a big loss for the high school and left a major gap in qualified female teachers in that remote area.

5.1.1 Existing low educational levels of women: The years of neglect of education, and girls' education in particular, has resulted in a population where an estimated 88% of women were thought to be illiterate in 1388 (see the Literacy Sub-Sector Review Report). As a result there is currently a relatively small pool of educated women available to become teachers.

5.1.2 Teacher salaries not competitive: In addition, especially in larger urban areas, the teaching profession has to compete with other jobs in order to attract female teachers. The lower government salaries of teachers compared to those offered in the non-government sector (especially with bilateral donors, UN agencies and international NGOs) may make it difficult to attract the best educated women to the teaching profession.

5.1.3 Keeping girls in school: While tremendous strides have been made in terms of enrolling girls in primary and secondary education (as well as in literacy programs), the enrolment for both boys and girls still appears to decrease starting with Grade 4. In 1387 there were 376,604 girls enrolled in Grade 1. If those girls followed a normal progression through the primary grades they would have been in Grade 4 in 1390. The total number of girls listed as enrolled in Grade 4 (including present, temporarily absent and permanently absent) in 1390 was 337,121. At a very minimum this indicates a dropout rate of 10% but the rate is likely much higher if temporary and permanent absentees are taken into account in terms of the Grade 4 enrolment.¹⁰

One critical challenge with regard to increasing the number of female teachers in the long-term, then, is keeping girls in school. More girls need to stay in school and complete primary and secondary education. Jackson (2011) found that the number one obstacle to girls' education was poverty followed by early or forced marriage (see Figure 3). These obstacles may be interlinked as early marriage may also be at least indirectly related to poverty.

With regard to keeping girls in school up to and through completion of secondary education, other obstacles are the shortage of girls' secondary schools and the shortage of female teachers (see also the section on Girls' Education). As of 1390, the Ministry reported that no female students were enrolled in secondary school in 200 districts (slightly more than half of all districts in the country) and there were no female teachers in 230 districts (MoE, 2011c). This is potentially a vicious circle

¹⁰ Since the overall average number of girls present in Grade 4 at the time of the school survey was 78%, the total number of dropouts in Grade 4 is probably in the range of 40,000-110,000 girls (or 10-30%).

where girls do not attend school due to a lack of female teachers and therefore more girls cannot be educated to become teachers (or another profession).

5.1.4 Attracting women from rural areas to the teaching profession: In rural areas, women may have few professional opportunities other than teaching. Yet they still face many challenges associated with completing at least Grade 14 through a Teacher Training College (TTC) in order to obtain the minimum required qualifications. Although there are now 42 TTCs throughout the country these are primarily located in provincial capitals which, while a vast improvement since 1386, are often still a far distance from where young women are living. For reasons of family, culture or perhaps fears of insecurity it can be difficult for young women to leave their homes to attend a TTC, especially without female dormitories or without an escort by a male relative. To address this problem the Teacher Education Department started a program of developing District Teacher Support Centres but these do not yet exist in every district and Lexow (2012: 22) reports that these are "so far too poorly equipped to really make a difference on the ground." In addition, the low enrolment of girls in rural areas, especially in higher grades means that it is difficult to find young women who can even meet the requirements for admission to a TTC (Lexow, 2012).

Beyond this problem of TTC availability (or the availability of District Teacher Support Centres) are the bigger challenges related to poverty and culture. Keeping girls in school has an economic cost to families, either directly or via opportunity costs. In addition, many young women are married early and have children of their own, which further complicates their ability to work as teachers.

5.1.5 Attracting existing female teachers to rural areas: In 1390, the Ministry estimated that 90% of existing qualified female teachers were located in the nine major urban centres of Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar, Mazar, Badakhshan, Takhar, Baghlan, Jozjan and Faryab (MoE, 2011c). One possible way of increasing the number of female teachers in rural areas is for existing teachers to agree to move to a different location. While this may be possible in some instances, women may not want to relocate to another area of the country (even accompanied by their husbands) for reasons of language, culture or security. In addition women living in urban centres have more access to goods and services than do women living in rural areas which would probably result in a less comfortable lifestyle if they chose to relocate.

5.2 Local solutions and types of support needed for increasing female teachers

No doubt a variety of strategies will need to be pursued in order to increase the number of female teachers throughout the country. Over the medium- to long-term, the most effective strategies are likely to involve increasing efforts to educate girls in rural areas, including through community based education, so that some will stay in their communities to become teachers. This will take time if the goal is for them to complete at least 14 years of education.

The Ministry has proposed to provide additional incentives to already existing female teachers if they accept to relocate with their husbands to remote areas. While this strategy will attract a limited number of qualified individuals, it is unlikely to attract the number required and, even if it does, is probably not sustainable from an economic standpoint. Instead, focusing efforts on keeping girls in school, recruiting and attracting female teacher education students from rural areas to the teaching profession, and training female teachers from within the community, are likely to be more effective in the long-term.

Towards that end, one Ministry strategy is to provide scholarships for female students from remote areas to attend TTCs. Female teacher education students can receive incentives and scholarships on

the condition that they return to their communities to teach after completing the teacher education program. EQUIP II currently has a scholarship program for this purpose. Future sub-sector reviews should include an evaluation of the scholarships in order to determine whether the program is working effectively.

Hiring women teachers from local communities will be possible if, in the short-term, the qualifications are relaxed somewhat for women from remote areas. NGO-run CBE programs frequently hire unqualified female teachers but then invest time and effort in training and supervision to make them as effective as possible. Proven results from CBE programs indicate that it is possible to train Grade 12 graduates as teachers, especially as teachers for the primary grades. Increasing the strength of the District Teacher Training Teams (DT3) and partnering with NGOs to provide training and supervision will help support new female teachers in remote districts. The creation of a teacher professional development system with a career ladder (discussed earlier) should also provide opportunities for continued development of these teachers. If women can be recruited as teachers in their own communities there is a greater chance that they will be present in the classroom and remain in the community.

Additional incentives that may be considered to help increase the number of female teachers in remote areas include:

- Child care - this may be especially needed if women agree to relocate to areas where they do not have a family support network
- Proper water and sanitation facilities for female teachers as well as students
- Allowances (or living expenses) for male family members to serve as escorts for young women who travel to attend TTCs
- Some form of incentive to families in order to keep girls in secondary school since poverty has been identified as the number one obstacle to girls' education (Jackson, 2011). An example of such an incentive is the food assistance currently provided to female secondary students. Such incentives, however, must be clearly linked with attendance.

It will take many years to increase the number of qualified female teachers in remote areas of the country. Strategies for doing so will necessarily change along the way. "Affirmative action" type policies, such as lowering the minimum qualifications for teachers in remote areas or lowering the admissions requirements for women from rural areas to attend TTCs or universities, will most likely be needed in the short term. As more girls progress through the formal education system in rural areas, however, these policies can be changed to meet the needs of the new situation.

6 Sub-sector challenges

With an estimated 45-50% of primary school-aged children out of school throughout the country (CSO and UNICEF, 2012) Afghanistan faces severe challenges with regard to expanding access to quality education over the coming decade. Since it will take many years to address all of the challenges this section will focus on the major challenges that can be addressed over the next year or two.

6.1 Increasing (or maintaining) access

The Ministry has made huge strides in increasing accessing over the last 10 years though, as would be expected, the rate of increase is slowing. Major access challenges in 1391 include:

- **Making schools safe** - Insecurity throughout the country is one critical issue where MoE must continue to exert effort. While the number of schools closed due to insecurity has decreased from its high point in 1387, school closings are still occurring (e.g. in Ghazni province in 1391) and 500 schools were still closed at the end of 1390. Closed schools mean that children in those areas have no access to education.
- **Reaching children in remote areas** - The country's geography and the largely rural population mean that some children are living in less densely populated areas of the country. These children are more difficult to reach as in some instances it is not cost-effective to construct schools in these areas and it is more difficult to attract qualified teachers, especially women, to remote areas.
- **Increasing the number of female teachers, especially in rural areas** - Attracting and retaining girls in school continues to be a challenge for cultural and economic reasons. One inhibitor to girls staying in school past Grade 4 is the lack of female teachers throughout the country. According to the country presentation to GPE and EMIS information, in 1389 there were no girls in grade ten in 159 out of 364 rural districts and in 230 districts there was not a single qualified female teacher (i.e. a Grade 14 graduate).
- **Attracting all seven year old children into the system** - In 1390 the gross intake rate for Grade 1 decreased from that of 1389. One reason given was that the intake rate dropped due to insecurity in the country but other possible reasons, including over-crowded classes or the lack of teachers are also possibilities. The decreased intake rate in 1390 may have been an aberration but it is an area that bears close watch for 1391 and after. The easiest way for children to succeed in the education system is for them to start on time and progress through the system at an age appropriate pace. This is a critical step for improving the overall literacy rate in the country as well.
- **Re-attracting permanent absentees** - Over one million children are enrolled in school but permanently absent (nearly 20% of the total enrolment). Depending on how long these children have been listed as permanently absent they have between one to three years to re-enrol in the system. If they do not begin attending in that time period they will drop out - an enormous waste to the system as well as for the children themselves.
- **Providing physical learning spaces** - The Ministry estimates that 50% of schools do not have useable learning spaces. This is a problem with regard to access as well as educational quality. While children can learn in the open air, this is much more difficult in Afghanistan's harsh climate. Crowded or non-existent learning spaces may be related to high rates of absenteeism or may influence families not to enroll or continue to send their children to school.
- **Continuing to expand access to lower and upper secondary education** - The expansion of the education system over the last 10 years is also affecting the demand for lower and upper secondary education. According to the Afghanistan Constitution education is free and compulsory through Grade 9 which means a continued need to upgrade schools to include lower secondary grades. It also raises challenges with regard to existing teachers' abilities to teach at higher grade levels. The shortage of educated and skilled human capital throughout the country also necessitates a continued expansion of upper secondary education in the coming years.

6.2 Improving educational quality

As access has expanded at a rapid rate, quality has surely suffered. Attention to quality is a pressing issue in order to make sure that the investments in access pay off for the future of the country.

Major challenges with regard to improving educational quality in 1391 (and beyond) include:

- **Improving the quality of teachers** - Even though more than 90% of teachers have passed the national Teacher Competency Test, 68% of teachers still do not meet the government's minimum requirement for a qualified teacher (i.e. Grade 14 TTC graduate). Anecdotal reports

suggest that teachers are not well prepared to teach the new curriculum and that the quality of teaching in government schools is not of a high standard. Teachers are not familiar with learner centred pedagogy and some are lacking in content knowledge that is required in the new curriculum.

Story of a female teacher in Kabul:

This female teacher teaches primary and upper secondary classes in a Boys' High School in Kabul. She graduated from Sayed Jamaluddin Teacher Training Institute and has been teaching for 27 years. She is the mother of four children and it was her love of children that motivated her to become a teacher. Her husband and other family members also encouraged and supported her decision.

At first she was very comfortable teaching girls and was concerned that boys would not obey a female teacher. After she learned about Inclusive Education, though, she now feels comfortable teaching both boys and girls. She worries about how Afghan culture reinforces gender stereotypes and influences what and how children learn in school. For example in Afghan culture, girls are mostly involved in household activities and boys in social and economic activities. She finds that girls often face difficulty in learning math and scientific subjects, but are good in subjects related to housekeeping and social activities. She knows that this is a result of how girls and boys are involved in activities and treated at school and not because of genetic and biological differences. She wants other teachers to understand this point and work to solve this problem. She also knows that if all girls are to be able to pursue their education, then more flexibility will be needed at all levels of the system. She has seen that when girls are failing any of their classes, then their families do not allow them to continue because they think that the girls cannot learn. She knows the girls can learn if more support is provided for them.

According to her; teachers in Afghanistan face many challenges including their own difficult living situations that affect the quality of their teaching. She finds that MoE and the school administration are always insisting on quantity not quality of education which results in poor learning outcomes for children. For example they advise teachers to finish the textbooks by the end of the year. Because the current curriculum and textbooks are overloaded, however, teachers cannot get through everything unless they use a teacher centred approach and rush through the lessons. In addition the 20-day seminar provided by MoE was not sufficient for the teachers to learn the new curriculum especially since the master trainers themselves had difficulty understanding it.

This female teacher would like the trainings provided by TED to be focused on new and updated teaching methodologies and pedagogy because this is what the new generation of students is expecting. They want more participatory approaches and are enthusiastic about learning updated information but the teachers are largely unable to fulfil their students' expectations. She has found that the Inclusive and Child Friendly Education approach is a good and comprehensive methodology for teaching. This method helps teachers to provide a welcoming and participatory atmosphere in their classes so that students can learn effectively. It also encourages teachers to involve parents in their children's education, which helps increase the quality of education.

The Teacher's Message:

For quality education MoE needs to increase awareness raising programs for parents and work on building the self-confidence of teachers and updating their knowledge. MoE and school administrators also need to create supportive learning environments so that teachers can learn from one another without fear of being discredited. The current curriculum should be reviewed; more work needs to be done so that teachers are better prepared to help their students learn. She wants teachers to be honest and strong as they play a vital role strengthening the roots of Afghan society. Teachers should be well prepared, have proper lesson plans and make an effort to understand the needs of their students.

- **Distributing textbooks and teachers' guides** - While millions of textbooks were printed in 1390, it is still not known how many have been distributed and whether they were distributed at the

school level.¹¹ The Curriculum Department's survey of curriculum implementation for Grades 1-3 found that teachers complained of not receiving the teacher guides. In addition the team conducting school visits in Kabul City and Panjshir Province found that schools were often lacking sufficient quantities of textbooks. One worrisome finding is that families are purchasing textbooks in local markets even though the textbooks are supposed to be free to all students. This extra cost may be a barrier to education for children from poor families. While textbooks and teacher guides will never compensate for a good teacher, they will assist with implementation of the new curriculum and are huge investments that will bear no return if not distributed to the end users.

- **Continuing to improve and update the curriculum** - As of 1390 the full curriculum for Grades 1-12 had been updated. The full process for all primary and secondary grades took approximately 10 years. During that time the needs and expectations of the country have continued to change and the curriculum developers have increased their capacities. Teachers interviewed during this review process also commented that the curriculum for Grades 10-12 is advanced and students have not been prepared in earlier grades for the upper secondary curriculum.
- **Increasing the hours of instruction**, especially in crowded urban areas - For the early primary grades the Curriculum Department specifies 24 hours of instruction over a six day week (or four hours per day). In crowded areas, to compensate for an inadequate number of classrooms and teachers, schools operate on a shift system that reduces the number of hours of instruction to about three hours per day. Ultimately it will not be possible to improve learning outcomes without increasing the hours of instruction.
- **Improving the system of teacher supervision** - To date the General Education Department has not been involved in teacher supervision but rather has focused more on inspection of schools and teachers. Most teachers have participated in INSET-1 and INSET-2 but the limited numbers of days in these trainings is not sufficient for them to be able to implement the new pedagogies effectively in their classrooms. In addition most teachers have not received training on the new curriculum. Effective teacher supervisors will help improve the quality of the teaching and learning process.

6.3 Management

Continued efforts to improve the Ministry's management process will help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Ministry in the coming years. Major challenges for 1391 (and beyond) include:

- **Decentralizing processes to the provinces** - Efforts have already begun to decentralize various processes - such as collecting and entering annual school survey information, preparing provincial or district operational plans, and implementing the procurement process at the provincial level - but these efforts remain a formidable challenge for reasons related to infrastructure (such as availability of electricity and internet connectivity) as well as to capacity constraints (such as too few staff or unqualified or untrained personnel).
- **Strengthening and improving EMIS, monitoring and reporting** - The annual school survey process is labour intensive and prone to data entry errors through the process of manually entering thousands of school survey forms at the central level during a short period of time. One possible recommendation, as listed above, is decentralizing this process, which might eliminate some of the errors and should improve the timeliness of reporting. Because of capacity constraints at the district and provincial level, however, monitoring and reporting on implementation of plans also continue to be a challenge.

¹¹ According to the Publications Department, the central Ministry is responsible for ensuring the textbooks are distributed to the provinces. After that the Provincial Education Departments are responsible for distributing the textbooks to the schools.

- **Streamlining the procurement process** - To a large extent the procurement process is outside the control of MoE as it is governed by the national procurement law. Nevertheless some delays in the procurement process can be avoided (e.g. delays associated with incomplete or incorrect requests from Ministry directorates).
- **Increasing and monitoring school construction projects** - Having staff or TAs located in the provinces and traveling to districts continues to be a serious challenge. These staff are needed, however, to ensure that construction projects are built according to specifications.
- **Improving coordination (internal and external)** - There is a need for improved coordination both among departments in the Ministry and among the Ministry and its external partners. Regarding internal coordination two clear needs are for increased coordination between the Teacher Education Department and the Curriculum Department and the Teacher Education Department and the General Education Department. With regard to the former, the new curriculum has not yet been incorporated into the in-service trainings offered by TED. With regard to coordination with the General Education Department, TED already has experience through its DT3 program with regard to teacher supervision and can provide advice and guidance for the new system.
With regard to coordination among partners, the GMU reported that approximately 13 of 25 partners responded to its request for information on their education activities. It is essential that partners align their activities with the Ministry's objectives outlined in EIP and NESP-2. Doing this requires increased attention and effort applied to coordination.
- **Linking planning and budgeting** - The Ministry has improved its planning capacities but there is still a weak link with regard to linking operational plans to approved budgets in order to make the planning figures more realistic.

7 Recommendations

1. **Continue efforts to increase the number of female teachers** - As discussed in the separate section on Female Teachers there is a severe shortage of qualified female teachers everywhere in the country except Kabul City and other major urban centres. Consequently the Ministry must incorporate a variety of strategies to attract teachers for rural areas. Some strategies are described above. Focusing efforts on recruiting and attracting female teacher education students from rural areas to attend TTCs and hiring and training female teachers from within the community are likely to be more effective long-term strategies. If women can be recruited as teachers from their own communities there is a greater chance that they will be present in the classroom and remain in their communities.
2. **Continue efforts to improve teacher quality** - The quality of teachers is the single most important factor in the quality of education. A good quality teacher can help students learn, even without textbooks or proper classroom facilities. Currently in Afghanistan, however, 68% of teachers have only a Grade 12 education or less. Therefore it is imperative that teacher training efforts are continued and strengthened. TED and the Curriculum Department need to collaborate in the development of teacher training materials to ensure that the new curriculum is fully incorporated in teacher training. This is necessary for both the pre-service and the in-service teacher trainings. The professional development system that is under development is needed to provide a framework of qualifications for upgrading the qualifications and skills of existing teachers. In addition coordination of teacher training efforts is essential and should be part of the remit of the Teacher Education Working Group. Many NGOs have considerable teacher training experience and can be valuable resources for the Ministry. What is critical is that all teacher training efforts in the country are coordinated with TED and in accordance with the new curriculum, whether they are implemented directly through TED programs or as part of off-budget NGO activities in the country.

Additionally TED and partners need to increase efforts aimed at training lower and upper secondary teachers. The projected increases in secondary education over the coming few years necessitates well-trained teachers at that level of the system as well. The training for secondary teachers matched with the new secondary curriculum should begin as soon as possible.

3. **Expand and strengthen CBE to increase access** - Community-based education has the potential to minimize access problems for children in remote areas and for girls, at least in the short-term. The CBE policy is in need of updating and the Ministry must work to strengthen the hub school system so that MoE officials at all levels (central, provincial, district and school) understand the responsibilities of the hub schools and recognize the value of outreach classes as a strategy for improving access. It is important that these classes are not viewed as "less than" regular General Education classes, especially since a recent study (Burde and Linden, 2012) suggests that learning outcomes in CBE classes are equivalent to those of General Education schools.
4. **Continue and strengthen community outreach efforts** - In 1390 MoE officials throughout the country participated in public awareness campaigns to try to increase access to schooling. Active school shuras and community participation have been shown to be effective in both increasing access and making schools safer. School shuras, principals and education officials at all levels need to work with communities to advocate for schools as safe zones. Parents will not send their children to school if their children will be at risk either *en route* or once at school. In addition school shuras should be enlisted to reach out to community elders, religious leaders and parents to encourage all children to enrol in school and, in particular, to try to encourage "permanent absentees" to re-enter schools.
5. **Increase access to quality physical learning spaces** - Undoubtedly the Ministry and its partners must continue to build schools and classrooms. As part of this effort, however, consideration should be given to increasing the number of small-scale projects constructed by communities which is one component of EQUIP II. These small-scale projects are quicker to implement and evidence suggests that the quality of construction is sometimes better due to the use of local materials and the smaller scale of the projects. Increased monitoring and inspection during the construction process will also be critical.

In addition to building schools and classrooms, the Ministry must aggressively pursue the use of alternative learning spaces or temporary classrooms until schools can be constructed. Increasing mosque-based education using the government teachers and curriculum may be one option to increase the number of learning spaces. The Ministry could also train religious leaders who want to serve as teachers so that they are familiar with the government curriculum. Continued and increased rental of private facilities, while expensive, may also be necessary in urban centres in order to reduce class sizes and increase the hours of instruction per day.
6. **Continue to strengthen and improve management and administrative processes** - From decentralizing processes such as procurement, planning and monitoring and reporting to the distribution of textbooks and the alignment of plans with budgets continued effort is needed to increase the capacity of the Ministry staff to perform planning, management and administrative functions more effectively. In 1391 MoE should continue to focus on the activities identified in the EIP in order to strengthen the program of education governance and administration. Key actions in 1391 must include improved coordination among all partners (both internal and external); clarification of procurement policies and procedures among departments at the central level as well as at the provincial level; increased capacity at district and provincial level with regard to completion of the annual school survey; and increased efforts to link planning with budgeting at all levels.

Annexes

Annex 1. Reports of school visits

Kabul City

1. NGO-supported Girls' High School

The school was established in 2003 by an Afghan NGO that has a protocol with Ministry of Education which indicates; if the NGO can't find funding for the school, Ministry of Education will bring this school under its coverage. This school provides accelerated education for girls who were not able to continue their education due to war and family reasons. The school operates two shifts morning (grades 6-9) and afternoon (grades 10-12). The school attendance is as per MoE rules and regulations and the duration of the school year is nine month with the exams. The school does not have summer and winter vacations as this is part of the time that is used for students to catch up.

In 1390 total enrollment was 302 of which 20-25 students were permanently absent. The number of student present in school were 289. In 1390, 37 students graduated from grade 12. In 1391 the total number of student in school is 340. The school accepts girls from different districts of Kabul. The school principal mentioned that lots of girls who cannot go to formal schools for their education want to come to this school but the school is unable to accept all of them due to lack of resources and infrastructure. The NGO that supports the school has promised to build two more classes. This would enable the school to accept more students.

According to the Principal of school, the main reasons for girls not attending school are:

- Engagement and marriage: She mentioned that most of the students who are getting engaged or married are not coming to school. They are either prevented from their family's side or by their in-laws.
- Security: is the second reason for girls not to come to school. She gave an example that when there is a security issue like a blast in any part of the city than the families are not allowing their girls to come to school.

To overcome these challenges, the school shura and Principal of the school conducted several meeting with families to encourage them to allow their daughters attend school. School Shura organized special meeting with the families of those girls who were in school and for some reason were prevented by their families from coming to school. The Principal mentioned that so far they have been able to bring most of the students back to school.

The Principal also mentioned that the students are mostly adult girls. While coming to school sometimes they face problems like teasing by boys on the streets. In a few cases bags were snatched but the school has been able to find a solution by closely monitoring the street to the main road and bus stations. The principal believes the secure environment of this school and the quality of the education they provide is encouraging students to come to school and also inspiring families to allow their daughters to attend school.

Teachers and school management: The total number of teachers was 23 of which only one was male. The school is operating in two shifts morning and afternoon. Among the 23 teachers; 10 of them had Bachelor's degrees in Science, Literature, Social Science and the remaining 13 of them were graduated from Grade 14 and were also studying in University for their Bachelor's degree. Most of them were in their 3rd year at University.

The teachers have completed the INSET1-4 and one of the teachers was also a master trainer, who has provided teacher training for many years. The teachers in this school believe the training TED is providing for teachers is not helpful for teachers.

The Principal of the school has not received any of the SMT trainings conducted by MoE. She has 32 years of work experience as a teacher, teacher trainer and also Principal of school. This has helped her not to face any major problem, but she prefers to receive SMT trainings from MoE.

Textbooks: In 1390 the schools received complete all books for grades 7-9. In 1391 they have received the books only for Grades 10-11 though not complete sets. The students had to purchase the missing textbooks from the market.

According to the teachers and students interviewed the physical quality of the books is not good enough as they can be easily damaged and probably cannot be used for two years. The content of the books is not difficult for teachers as they have received the training, but student are facing lots of problems. They believe the content of the new books is difficult to understand and absorb for students who are in upper secondary, because the foundation in primary and lower secondary was too easy. In addition to that consistencies of the topics are not good. To overcome this problem some of the students are getting supporting courses, but due to financial problems and lower economic condition most of students only stay with school teachings.

The recommendation of the teachers was: If MoE is preparing the new curricula it should start from the foundation classes like primary and lower secondary. This is helping the students to be strong from the roots and they will not face problems in understanding while they are in higher grades. The new books should be edited clearly before sending for printing and also to save financial cost and avoid printing of books every year it is better to print the books in good quality at once.

External Support: Other than the on-going support from the NGO, this school has not received support from any other external agency (such as WFP or UNICEF). The only support they received was the Tetanus vaccination in 1389 by Ministry of Public Health. In response to the question of students health issues, they said as students are going to support courses and then coming to school, they are not eating breakfast and lunch, so the most health issues they have are low blood pressure and collapsing of students in school, especially in summer. The school has a first aid kit and can provide some first aid help to students within the school. The first aid kit was provided to the school by the NGO.

As this school is supported by an NGO, students receive uniforms, books and sometimes note books for free. The cost to the family is their food, notebooks/pencils/pens and also some of the books that that school does not have.

School shuras/management committee: The school shura is comprised of the Principal, the Head Master, scholars (religious person of the community), representative from the community and two people from families of students. The Principal and one of the family members are the only women on the shura but sometimes some female teachers also attend the shura meetings. The topics most frequently discussed are security of students and drop out of students from school. The meetings are very helpful as the shura is meeting the parents of the students who are not coming to school. This is enabling the school to know the main reason why the students are absent and also inform parents about the condition of their daughter in school. The students in this school are mostly over the age of 15; therefore, the school is very strict in terms of their security. They apply some strict

measure while students are in school such as they do not allow the students to go out of school once they come in and if a student wants to leave school someone from their family should come.

School maintenance and infrastructure: The building of the school was rented by the NGO and the overall condition of the school was good. The NGO supports the overall maintenance of the school as well.

Female Teachers: The female teachers in this school who were interviewed had Bachelor's degree and others were in their third year in University. They have received all the teacher trainings organized by TED, but the teachers believe the trainings from TED were not very helpful for them because the methods they learned are not applicable in schools.

The main challenges for female students as per these teachers and also as per one of the female student interviewed were: security, family problems (marriages and engagement) and economic and financial problems of families. These teachers believed that regular meetings with families of student is playing a key role in overcoming these challenges. In addition the teachers and principal of the school stand in front of the school when the students are leaving in order to interfere and solve any security incidents that arise. Families therefore believe that this school is a secure place for their daughters. They also help for the school hours of girls who are not able to come in certain timing because of their families.

When the teachers were asked if they are willing to go to provinces? Their response was positive, but few things should be taken in consideration; which is providing regional salary on top of their regular salary, safe and secure environment and finally to provide proper living condition for them and their families.

Additional Observation: The overall condition of this school is good and functional; because this school was supported by NGO it had a very well equipped computer lab and library. They have received the books partially but the remaining few subjects and the books for Grade 12 were purchased by students. Therefore, all the students had books. The classes were not overcrowded and the ratio of student teacher was 1:20.

As the teachers received complete trainings, the teaching method was interactive and participatory. The classes we visited were Geography, Chemistry and Computer. In all these classes the method of teaching was not only theoretical. The teacher had brought a map and other practical materials to show to students. In the computer class the students were working directly in the computer lab.

2. Kabul Mixed Secondary Tent School

The school runs classes from grades 1 to 9 in three shifts:

1. 6:45 to 9:30 (Primary Grades 1-3 girls and boys but separate classes)
2. 9:45 to 1:15 (Primary Grades 3- 5 boys and girls but separate classes and lower secondary only girls)
3. 1:30 to 5:00 (lower secondary only boys)

In 1390 the student enrollment was 2,751 of which 1,730 were boys and 1,021 were girls. The number of students attending school in 1390 was 2,187 as 564 dropped out of school; most of whom were boys who left either due to economic problems of family or because they enrolled in another school. The number of student in 1391 is 3,126 of which 1,851 are boys and are 1,290 girls. The dropout number in 1391 is 400 boys and 221 girls. The school building was small and all students were not in the main building. Of the 3,126 students 1,200 students were in the main building of the

school built by MoE and 1,926 students studied under the tent. Most of the students leave school because of financial problems of their families and female student sometimes leave school because they get engaged or married. The principal mentioned as per the new rule of Ministry of Education that when the students are not coming to school for three years their name will be removed from the school registration. If a student returns to school within two years then they are accepted in the class where s/he was previously enrolled. To return after two year the student needs to bring a letter from Kabul Provincial Education Directorate. If s/he is older than the age group of class then s/he will be introduced to the accelerated learning schools.

The school management had no data on the number of out of school children in the school catchment area. This school was also not providing ECCE for children in its surrounding area. The school management in the school shura meetings with families and through the mosques encourages families to send their children to school. The school sometimes faces some security problems especially for girls coming to school, but with the help of the school shura, elders of the community and police these threats are now minimized.

Teachers and school management: The total number of teachers as per the MoE Tashkil was 91 of which 27 were male and 64 were female. One of the teachers holds a Master's degree, seven of them have Bachelor's degrees, 21 Grade 12 graduates and 63 were Grade 14 teacher training colleges graduates.

The school teachers have attended the first round of the INSET and the principal of the school had attended both of the TED school management trainings. The teachers believed that the training provided for teachers is not helpful because it is just an orientation. The trainers who provide training are also not very skilled.

Another main concern the management had was the recruitment of the teachers. They believed the recruitment of teachers is much politicized. When they need a teacher for any subject of the school, a professional person who holds a relevant degree is not hired. Even if the school introduces a professional teacher who has a degree for the needed subject, MoE is not hiring him/her; instead they send someone who holds Grade 12 and has no experience.

The teachers in this school also complained about “pay and grade” system. Teachers complained it has been 3-4 years that they have not received any step and the new pay and grade system has not brought any new changes for their status. This does not motivate qualified people to be recruited as teachers in schools.

Textbooks: The school has received the books for Grades 1-9 but not in sufficient quantity. For the subjects for which textbooks are not available the teachers give notes and students also purchase some of the textbooks from the market.

The teachers stated that the textbooks have good content but there are lots of printing omissions and oversights. Those who work on the editing and proof reading should have taken that in consideration (i.e. in physics explanation of a topic is given but there is no shape/picture for it). In addition the books are very complicated for student to understand because the content of the previous curriculum was easy and now jumping to the new curriculum is difficult for student to absorb.

External support: The school condition was very bad. The formal school had only eight classrooms and was also far from the main school catchment area. Therefore students mostly attend in the tent classes. The school management has informed MoE and all international organizations that have

visited the school that the condition of the classrooms is poor, but support has yet been received. So far the only support the school has received was 20 boxes of notebooks and bags for primary students from UNICEF.

The school principal said it that for more than a month he has been requesting MoE for electricity cabling for the school, which costs only 5709 AFS (approximately \$120), but has not received it yet and the request is still pending.

The principal also stated that, as the school ground is rocky, sometimes students fall and hurt themselves. The school had no first aid kit for these cases, and therefore the school management with some contribution from teachers purchased a first aid kit for emergency cases.

The cost to the parents is mostly for notebooks, uniforms (mostly for girls not boys), pens/pencils and some textbooks that the school does not have. One of the teachers who was also a mother of four mentioned that this cost is a lot for parents and sometimes causes parents to prevent their children from going to school as they cannot afford to fulfill all the needs.

School shura/management committee: The school shura has 16 members consisting of the principal, head masters, experienced teachers, well known/influential community representatives, and an Imam (religious person). The external members of the shura are male but some of the teachers are women. The topics which the shura mostly include on their agenda are:

1. Finding a proper place for the school
2. Finding proper and good quality tents for the school
3. Student attendance
4. Encouraging more students in the school catchment area to come to school
5. Meeting with parents of students

For increasing the enrollment of students, the school shura is conducting a campaign in the school catchment area. The shura through mosques announce and also encourage people to send their children to school. In order to increase the number of female students in school, the school has increased the number of female teachers. The school shura meets with the parent of the students every 15 days to discuss the presence of female students. The community representatives also support the school in terms of security for girls on the way to school. These measures have helped to encourage families to allow their daughters to come to school.

School maintenance and infrastructure: The school infrastructure is in very bad condition. The tent classes are very uncomfortable and in bad condition. The principal said that he has requested proper plastic tents from MoE and other international organizations but no one has provided any. The school's current tents are torn. Also summer is coming soon which will make the classes very uncomfortable for the students.

The school principal and the teachers contributed some money for the construction of some parts of the school. In addition one community representative has provided all the cost of water wells for the school.

Female teachers: In this school we interviewed three teachers:

1. Head masters/teacher, second shift of school, holds a 14 grade degree in mathematics and had 20 years of experience as a teacher.
2. Teacher, hold a 14 grade degree in Dari literature, 19 years of teaching experience.
3. Teacher, hold Bachelors in Social Science, 22 year experience as teacher and master trainer.

The mentioned teachers had participated in INSET-1 and 2. These teachers believed that the INSET training was not provided by experienced and skilled master trainers; therefore they cannot train the teachers on all issues. In addition the teachers said the timing of the training was not good for teachers. MoE should organize the training in winter when the schools are off and teachers have more time to concentrate and also learn effectively. This is also helping the teachers to be prepared when the classes are started. For them they received the training on the new curriculum three months after the start of the school year and consequently had lots of problem in the preceding months with teaching the new books.

The teachers mentioned they face lots of challenges as teachers in this school. The quality of the tents is very bad; some of them are torn badly and while teaching in one class the other class beside/behind hears the voice of the teacher. It is very disturbing for both students and teachers and is also reducing the quality of education. They also mentioned that they do not have any computer lab and other materials required for practical works suggested in the books. Therefore their teaching is theoretical only. They also added that they do not have a kindergarten for their children, which is a problem that prevents female teachers from work.

When these teachers were asked if they can go in provinces for teaching, they responded that first MoE should send those teachers who are originally from other provinces, but who are in Kabul right now, to their home provinces. This will help reduction the cost to MoE as well. If MoE still needs female teachers for some provinces, then the female teachers from Kabul can go to other provinces, but they should have proper living conditions for themselves and their families. These teachers believe if MoE is providing a regional salary and proper living condition for female teachers they can go to other provinces.

The teachers also suggested that MoE provide a budget for the schools at the beginning of the year to enable the school management to fulfill the day to day needs of the school on time and effectively.

Additional observations: The formal building of the school which was built by the Ministry of Education had only eight classes and is far from the main catchment area for this school. The number of classrooms is not sufficient to cover the entire student body. In addition, as the physical school classrooms are far from the community, most people do not allow their children to go there. As a result, about 2,000 students attend school in three shifts in the tent classes.

The student teacher ratio was 1:30 and the teaching method was also participatory, but as the voice of the teacher in one class was heard in the other class, the classes seemed to be not comfortable. The space in every class not sufficient for group work and team work of students as they could hardly move from their chairs.

The teacher and principal mentioned that they need at least 30-40 rooms in their main school building and also one proper building for the annex of the school which is now under the tents. The school is also in need of a library, computer lab and science lab for the practical part of the lessons.

In one class the team observed a boy sitting in a girls' Grade 9 class. He is accompanying his two sisters in this class. His parents told the school management that if the school will enroll their son to come along with his sisters, then they will allow their daughters to attend school. If not their two daughters cannot come to school. In order to keep these two girls in school the principal agreed to accept the boy with his sisters.

3. Boys' High School, Kabul City

The school runs classes from grades 1 to 12, including girls from grades 3 to 6 in the morning. Girls' classes run at the same time but in separate classrooms from the boys in the morning. As of two years ago the school stopped enrolling girls and instead refers them to the girls' school in the area. Grades 7 to 12 are in the afternoon and constitute only boys. The school also conducts evening classes from 5pm to 7pm. Students attending the evening classes are in the age range of 17 to 22; the of whom left schooling in the past for various reasons, such as work or living outside the country. Evening classes are taught by the same teachers as in the two earlier shifts in return for some additional pay. The student enrollment for 1390 was around 12,800 of which 2,300 were girls and between 7,000 and 8,000 students are listed as permanent absentees. Students absent for three consecutive years will be dropped from the school registration. The school will introduce them to the evening classes (absorption capacity allowing) if they return. Current enrollment figure for 1391 stands at around 13,800 with a similar ratio of boys and girls to that of 1390. In addition to this, approximately 1,200 students (700 boys and 500 girls) attend the evening shift. The number of evening shift students in 1390 was nearly the same as in the current year. The administration stated that the school accounted for almost 24,000 students until 1383 before the students, including and mainly girls, were distributed to other schools in the municipality district as the schools gradually increased their absorption capacity and expanded their infrastructure.

There is no ECCE provision. No exact or estimated statistics are available on the number of out-of-school children in the community. However, the school encourages new enrollments every year through campaigns involving the school Shura, mosques and the families in the surrounding neighborhoods. There have been no major instances of insecurity preventing the children from attending school except some reports of bullying or boys engaging in fights outside the school. The school administration meets with parents every 15 days to discuss problems and seek solutions.

Teachers and school management: In 1390, 337 teachers taught in the school of which 127 were female. They all fell under the Ministry's Tashkeel. In the current year, there are 305 teachers under the Tashkeel. The decrease in the number is due to the transfer of some of the teachers to other schools and a reduction in the ceiling of the Tashkeel for the school. Forty-four of the teachers hold a Bachelor's degree, 209 have graduated from teacher training colleges and the remaining 52 are Grade 12 graduates. Most of the teachers (all but 40) have completed the four levels of INSET. The teachers who have not completed the training are mostly those who have been transferred from the provinces. The school principal, vice-principal and head-masters have all attended various School Management training programmes.

Textbooks: The school received new textbooks for grades 7, 8 and 9 in 1390. Grades 10 and 11 were provided with new textbooks this year. There is still a shortage (though not substantial) of new textbooks in the current year. The school administration and teachers interviewed raised concerns regarding the print quality of some of the books, but more so, the contents, which, as they noted, were considered to be too demanding and rather complicated (physics and mathematics were cited as examples). Oversight and inaccuracies were also noticed in the flow of some of the textbook contents. INSET has not been very effective or relevant in training/preparing teachers on the new textbooks, which renders teaching rather challenging.

External support: CIMIC-Italy has raised the school's boundary walls. A library and four toilets have been constructed by the Khatam-un-Nabi'een charity organization. A shade inside the school has

been built by a local community member. Students of grade 1 have received school bags from UNICEF as well as stationery for grades 1 to 3. The school administration has a position for a health worker but they have not been able to recruit anybody. There have been no regular visits to the school by any health teams. Dust, dirt and congested toilets are causes of health problems, especially in the summer.

School shura/management committee: The school shura has 16 members, consisting of teachers, parents (3 females), administration, two 10th grade students, Imam and influential/well-respected community members. The Shura has had the responsibility of managing/implementing the EQUIP grant for the school. This includes construction of a new building with 16 classrooms in the compound in 1390. The shura meets regularly to discuss problems of various natures and to seek solutions for them such as student performance, school discipline and maintenance, student safety, teaching, textbooks, and encouraging school enrollment by involving the local mosques.

School maintenance and infrastructure: New classrooms have been built (not just in 1390 but over the last few years) with funding from the Japanese government, UNICEF and EQUIP. In addition 10 computer stations have been donated by a community member and the school has received 200 chairs from a local business firm. Three old buildings still stand in the school compound and these require repairs. Furthermore, the school's needs in terms of infrastructure facilities were noted to be a warehouse, meeting room, hall for gatherings, computer lab and computers, water reservoir, deep well for drinking water, facilities and equipment for chemistry/physics/biology labs.

Female teachers: The teacher interviewed was 27 years old. She is a graduate of a teacher training college in Kabul with a degree in Maths and Geometry. She is teaching the same subjects and indicated that she is currently a 3rd year student of Law and Political Science at Kabul University, which she attends in the evenings. She has completed INSET 1 and 2.

She noted that girls, in general, had more restrictions compared to boys in pursuing education and moving up that ladder. This is due to cultural, family and other reasons. Sporadic incidents of bullying by boys of girls are reported to the school. The school administration and teachers take up the matter with the parents. Some of the challenges highlighted by the teacher are:

- Unavailability of sufficient textbooks or late delivery of textbooks to the school
- The lack of proper lab facilities for practical work, resulting in more reliance on theory
- Inadequacy of the teacher training programs (i.e., INSET) in terms of substance, relevance, timing and organization
- High teacher/student ratio (sometimes reaching 1/55-60)

Additional observations: The teacher/student ratio stands at around 1/45. The teaching methodology was described to be student-centered, which is also encouraged through the new textbooks. However, the implementation of this requires, amongst other things, adequate teacher training, facilities and teacher/student ratio. The transition from a traditionally teacher-centered methodology to a student-centered approach is a gradual process. In general, the school's physical conditions seemed to be in good shape, including the availability of enough chairs and desks.

During the brainstorming with some of the teachers and the administration at the end of the visit, the following points were noted:

- INSET was said to be inadequate and irrelevant, rendering teaching of the new textbooks a challenging task. The timing and organization of the INSET as well as the capacity/quality of the INSET trainers were reported to be the short-falls.

- Some of the textbooks need to be revisited/reviewed in terms of contents.
- Concerns over the implementation of the “pay and grade” system. Teachers complained that there are no incentive or promotion mechanisms or, as such, follow-up on any decisions by the Ministry of Education. This can be a demotivating factor for absorbing qualified teaching staff.
- Disregard for merit, qualifications or experience in the appointment of certain teachers ‘recommended’ and ‘favored’ by the MOE;
- Distribution of land to teachers was cited as a promise by the MOE on which no action or follow-up has been witnessed.

4. Girls' High School, Kabul City

The school runs classes from grades 1 to 12, operating in three shifts from 6:30am to 5:15pm. All students are girls. Adjacent to this is a boys' high school. The student enrollment for 1390 stood at around 7,300 of which 6,850 were in regular attendance and the rest were permanent absentees or had transferred to other schools. It is the only girls' school in the municipality. The teacher/student ratio is about 1/50.

There is no ECCE provision. No exact or estimated statistics are available on the number of out-of-school children in the community. However, the school encourages new enrollments every year through campaigns involving the school shura, community members, mosques and families. There have been no major instances of insecurity preventing girls from attending the school, however, instances of bullying by boys have been reported. The local police have been cooperative in addressing this problem. Family issues, cultural and economic problems are, in general, other barriers to girls' education. The school administration meets with parents every 15 days to discuss problems and seek solutions. The school shura also discusses these issues on a regular basis. The administration noted that some of the families living in the surrounding community are very conservative and traditional. No instances of any threats to the school have been reported.

Teachers and school management: The school has 193 teaching positions in the Tashkeel of which 172 are filled (all female). The teachers consist of two Master's graduates (Chemistry and History), 59 Bachelor's graduates, 107 graduates from teacher training colleges, two 13th grade graduates and two 12th grade graduates. Teachers in the last two categories are currently attending teacher training colleges. Most of the teachers have completed INSET up to level 3. The school principal, vice principal and head-masters have all attended various school management training programs (including SMT) in addition to various other workshops, seminars and training programs. The relevance and usefulness of these vary across the programs. The principal is a graduate of the Law and Political Science Faculty of Kabul University.

Textbooks: The school received new textbooks for grades 7-9 in 1390. Grades 10 and 11 were provided with new textbooks this year. New textbooks for grade 12 are expected to become available in 1392. Similar to the observations elsewhere, the school described the contents of some of the new textbooks as very complicated and difficult to teach or understand, with occasional oversights and omissions. Reference was made essentially to science subjects. The print quality of the new textbooks was said to be ok. INSET has not been very effective or relevant in training/preparing teachers on the new textbooks, which renders teaching rather challenging. It was indicated, for example, that the INSET program for grade 10 was conducted nearly two months after the start of the school year and distribution of the new textbooks for the grade. The late timing of the program left teachers in a challenging position. The school principal and vice-principal said that

the last INSET program with a focus on grades 10 and 11, which ended in late May was more of a workshop than a training program. Training methods and instruction were weak. It was indicated that in some instances the program organizers would train one of the teachers for a period of six days and subsequently release her to train others. This would compromise the quality of training.

External support: The school was allocated Afs. 141,000 (approximately \$2,900) under EQUIP. The money was used to purchase a computer station, a welding machine (to fix broken frames of chairs and desks) and some lab equipment. The school hoped for the allocation to be more discretionary next time so that they could prioritize their needs and utilize the resources, accordingly. UNICEF provided the school with some stationery and school bags in 1390. The school has a health centre that is usually supported through the school shura and, on one occasion, by the Afghan Red Crescent Society.

School shura/management committee: The school shura has 16 members, eight of whom are female. The Shura consists of teachers, parents, the school administration, and influential/well-respected community members. Amongst other things, the shura has contributed to the repair of the school gate, making the school sign board, landscaping and planting. The contributions have come mainly from the community members represented on the shura, which meets every 15 days to discuss various issues and works closely with the local mosques to advocate for girls' and boys' education. The administration stated that families of students are yet to participate more actively in the school's affairs.

School maintenance and infrastructure: The lack of proper toilets was indicated as a serious problem. There are currently 10 latrines for a student population of nearly 7,000. There is no provision for the teachers and other staff of the school. The school's many requests to the Ministry and partner agencies to construct new toilets and repair the existing ones have not yet been met. A building with 16 classrooms that is currently being constructed with the support of UNICEF has made no provision for toilets. No shortage of water was noted in the school. Contributions from families and community members have been used to paint the administration office and some of the classrooms.

Female teachers: The teacher interviewed was 47 years-old and holds a Bachelor's degree in Dari Literature. She has a combined 27 years of professional experience, including school administration and teaching at different intervals. She teaches Dari Literature in lower secondary classes i.e., grade 7. She has not attended INSET, but mentioned that she has completed other relevant teacher training and capacity development programs, including workshops and seminars. The teacher expressed her satisfaction with the school administration. She emphasized the need for merit-based appointment of teachers through the Ministry of Education. The role of families in supporting and encouraging their children, especially girls, is deemed to be a key factor. She indicated that the new textbooks promote a student-based approach to teaching if adequate training is provided to the teachers.

If her security was ensured and adequate financial provisions were made to meet her family's needs, she would be willing to take up a teaching position outside Kabul (her native hometown). In this context, the school administration noted that some of the teachers who have volunteered to relocate outside Kabul to teach have not received the support promised by the MOE (such as additional pay, accommodation etc.)

Additional observations: In general, the school's physical condition seemed to be in good shape, including the availability of enough chairs and desks. The lack of proper toilet facilities seemed to be a dire problem. As indicated above, the teacher/student ratio is not at the acceptable level and classrooms were packed with students. Similar to the views expressed in other schools, this school also raised concerns about the inadequacy of INSET programs as well as the "pay and grade" system. It was indicated that the MOE is usually inconsistent in giving directions to the schools vis-à-vis curriculum. For instance, initially the Ministry instructed schools to combine mathematics, geometry and trigonometry into one textbook and to be taught by one teacher. This instruction changed three times and, each time, it amounted to a substantial amount of time, effort and re-planning for the schools. They also indicated that their requests to MoE are sometimes treated indifferently and the school staff often have to spend hours and days at the Ministry or the Kabul Education Directorate to obtain signatures.

The school needs a computer lab with sufficient computers for students, considering that computer literacy is part of the school's curriculum.

Panjshir Province

1. Boys' High School

The school runs classes from grades 1 to 12, operating in two shifts from 6am to 12:45pm (morning shift) and from 1pm to 5pm (afternoon shift). All students are boys. The student enrollment for 1390 stood around 1,450 and around 100 students accounted for permanent absentees. The teacher/student ratio is about 1/55. The current enrolment figure is about 1,540.

There is no provision for ECCE. No exact or estimated statistics are available on the number of out-of-school children in the community. However, according to the school principal, almost all school age children in the surrounding community are attending the general schools, literacy classes or madrassas. No security incidents have been reported or recorded. *Lack of transport facilities, rough terrain and long distances were noted as some of the main problems for the students to access the school. During the classroom visits, two grade 12 students mentioned that they walked to the school in the morning and back home in the afternoon for more than 2 hours each way, every day.*

The school administration is in regular contact with parents and the community elders to discuss problems and to seek solutions, particularly in encouraging student attendance.

Teachers and school management:

As per the 1390 *Tashkeel* (and similarly this year), the school has 33 teaching positions of which seven positions are yet to be filled. All teachers are male. The teachers consist of Bachelor's graduates (five teachers), teacher training college graduates or 14th grade (17 teachers) and 12th grade graduates (four teachers who currently attend in-service teacher training). As per the school administration, all teachers have attended the four different levels of INSET. The principal and headmasters have attended the School Management Training (SMT) programmes. It was stated that the SMT programmes were more of a description of the Terms of Reference of the school administrators rather than focusing on new methods and approaches of management.

Textbooks:

The school has received new textbooks from grades 1 to 9. There were serious shortages of textbooks for grades 10 to 12. The teachers mostly relied on lectures and notes. No major challenges were highlighted in the teaching of the new textbooks nor were noted any specific complaints with regard to the print quality of the new textbooks. *However, during the classroom visits, students of*

one of the grade 12 classes found the contents of the English subject taught in grade 12 rather complicated. In talking to the teacher who had 14 years of education (the talking was done in basic English for better class observation and engagement), the quality of his English and proficiency level was noted to be low. The teacher acknowledged that extra coaching classes (specific reference was made to private coaching classes) were necessary for the level of English taught at grade 12.

External support:

The school has received a grant under EQUIP. The grant money was used to purchase lab equipment, supplementary teaching materials, books for the library and other items. In 1390, UNICEF provided stationery and school kits to grades 1 to 3. WFP provides food for students from grade 1 to 9. The school administration noted that no mobile health teams have ever visited the school from the Provincial Public Health Directorate. Cooperation between the PPHD and the Provincial Education Directorate was described as almost non-existent. The school has a health committee that consists of teachers. Diarrhea and skin diseases were said to be occasional illnesses amongst students. The school does not have access to sufficient safe drinking water.

School Shura/management committee:

The school shura has 12 members, comprised of the local Imam, influential and active community residents, parents, school administration, community representative or *Wakeel* and two students. The shura has been active in attracting resources collected by the people of Panjsher (living inside and outside the province) at the initiative of the Minister of Interior. The school has utilised these resources/contributions in academic affairs, purchase of necessary chairs and desks for students, repair works, landscaping of the school compound, incentives for teachers, running of coaching classes for science subjects after the official school hours, and material/financial support for teachers coming from the adjacent Kapisa province. (It was noted that seven teachers came from that province and they were accommodated at the school.) The school signboard was contributed by the family of one of the students at the initiative of the shura. It was indicated that the shura was also involved in managing the construction of the new building with 16 classrooms with funding under the DIAG programme.

School maintenance and infrastructure:

No key problems were mentioned or noted in terms of the infrastructure needs. It seemed that the new building under constructions on the school compound would provide additional space for classrooms. *However, some of the general challenges that the school faced were as follows:*

- Lack of access to safe drinking water in the school compound
- Shortage of qualified teachers
- Rough terrain, absence of regular transport facilities and distance to the school
- Shortage of textbooks for the upper secondary classes
- Limited supplementary teaching materials
- The need for a meeting room and hall.
- The need for more computer stations

A small library was set up in the main school building. Most of the books were donated by the Ahmad Shah Masood Foundation or purchased with the grant money from EQUIP. The library was well-kept and a few students were noticed there during their free periods. The library was run by a librarian who was a teacher at the same time.

Conversation with the teacher:

The teacher interviewed had 14 years of education. He was a graduate of a teacher training college in 1360 and had 27 years of teaching experience. He was teaching Dari Literature to grades 8 to 12. The teacher indicated that he had attended all levels of the INSET and did not describe any specific problems with teaching the new textbooks. He emphasized the importance of providing adequate incentives and relocation support in encouraging and attracting teachers from other provinces. The teacher raised concerns about the transparency of the teacher recruitment procedures as well as the lack of clarity and inadequacy of the 'pay and grade' system.

2. Girls' High School

The school runs classes from grades 1 to 12 in two shifts: from 6:30 am to 11:15 am and from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm. In 1390 the student enrollment was 965 girls, and in 1391 this number reached to 1,065 girls. The school management had no data on the number of out of school children in the school catchment area. The principal said as this province is secure people do not prevent children from school but the only problem is the distance of school from villages. Due to the long distance of villages from school some children cannot attend school and they are enrolled in Community Based School or Literacy classes in their villages. The school tried to solve the problem by renting vehicles for students who live far from school, but still around 3,000 students transferred from this province to other provinces. This school was also not providing ECCE for children in its surrounding area.

The conservative culture sometimes prevent adult girls from coming to school. To overcome that problem the school conducts monthly meetings with parents. The food assistance from WFP had also helped to solve this problem, but now since the food assistance has decreased there has been a reduction in the enrollment of new students. Due to the food assistance the school enrolled about 105 new students in grade one in 1390 but in 1391 after the reduction in food provided only 75 new students were enrolled.

Teachers and school management: The total number of teachers was 29 of which two were male. Twenty-one teachers were hired as per the MoE Tashkil and eight others were contracted teachers. One of the teachers hold a Bachelor's degree, two of them were graduated from Grade 12 and the remaining 26 graduated from Grade 14 of teacher training colleges.

The school teachers have attended all four of the INSET trainings and the principal had attended both SMT trainings. The Principal and teachers believed that the training provided for management and teachers was helpful, especially for the management of school.

Textbooks: In 1390 this school received books for Grades 1-10 and in 1391 they received the additional books for those classes. The numbers of books are still not fulfilling the needs of students and for those missing copies student purchase them from the market. The new curriculum is good and easy for teachers to teach but the physical quality of the books is not good because they tear very easily and can hardly last for two years. As the schools are not having the facilities like computer lab, science lab and other practical materials the scientific subjects are difficult for students to absorb.

External support: This school was rich in terms of receiving external support. So far UNICEF has supplied notebooks for students and teacher kits. WFP is also providing food for the students regularly. Afghanistan Azad an NGO has supported the reconstruction of the school. This NGO has also helped in hiring a teacher for health subject and has also purchased the first aid kit for the school. The students have received training on Tuberculosis twice. They also receive training on self-

hygiene. As the students are walking long distances, especially in summer, the school management faces cases of low blood pressure.

The costs incurred by families are for notebooks, uniforms, pens/pencils and sometimes textbooks for their children.

School Shura/management committee: The school shura had 16 members and consists of the principal, the head masters, experienced teachers, well known/influential community representatives, and Imam (religious person). Four member of the school shura were female.

Through the school shura EQUIP has purchased furniture and around 300 books for the library of the school. Afghanistan Azad has also supplied 700 books for the school library. In addition the school shura is helping to clean the snow and plant trees and flowers at the school. They also purchased around 70 books for the school library.

With the help of the school shura, the school has been able to bring two students who were prevented by their families from school. The regular meetings of the school shura and especially active participation of shura members encourage the families and also students to come to school.

School maintenance and infrastructure: The school infrastructure was good and functional. The school building was constructed by a PRT in 1384 but no proper construction has been done to the school. The school has been able to gain the support of the community through the school shura for cleaning the school but the infrastructure is costly and the community cannot support that.

Happy Children, an NGO, has repaired around 80 chairs for the school and has also purchased tools and some books for the school. This NGO has also promised to support the school for three years and do some construction work if it is not provided from another source.

Female teachers: During the visit the team interviewed one female teacher who came from Kapisa province. She holds a Grade 14 degree in Dari literature from teacher training institute. She has received all the four INSET trainings and has also worked as a master trainer for ADA to provide INSET training several times. She believes these trainings are very helpful and supportive for teachers both from academic and methodological points of view. She mentioned the new curriculum is very good and high standard but in Afghanistan there is a lack of professional teachers. Therefore, a teacher teaches a subject which is not her/his field or he/she does not have sufficient knowledge of it. This is creating a problem in passing the information to the students. Similarly there is a problem with teachers who teach computer but all based on theory when even the teachers themselves have not been trained on this subject.

In response of the problems she faces as a teacher; she said, being a teacher and also a mother it is hard to work when there is no proper working environment. She said they do not have any kindergarten for their children from school side and must pay for that from their own salary. Taken in consideration the low amount of salary and uncomfortable working environment, it is hard for her to work. She also said she has come from another province but she is not receiving any additional salary. Teaching materials and teaching plans is another challenge. She mentioned that the teachers do not receive all the needed books and sometimes borrow students' books in order to prepare their lesson plans. To provide quality education to students, a teacher needs proper preparation before entering the class.

Additional observations: The school building was good and functional but some minor repairs were needed for the boundary wall and roof of the classrooms. The visual materials like charts, maps

photographs were on the walls of the classrooms as well as in every corridor, which was supporting students in learning those topics.

The student teacher ratio was 1:35 and the teaching method was also semi-participatory. We also observed that students did not have all of their textbooks. In classes around 7-8 % of the students had no books and were sharing books with other students.

3. Mixed Secondary School

The school runs classes from grades 1 to 9 in two shifts: from 6:30 am to 11:15 am and from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm. In 1390 the total enrollment was 175. The school management had no data on the number of out of school children in the school catchment area. This school was co-education until grade 6 and after that the boys were transferred to boys' secondary school and the girls will remain until grade nine in this school. As they have female teachers the dropout rate of students especially in secondary level is less. This school was also not providing ECCE for children in its surrounding area.

Teachers and school management: The total number of teachers was 11 of which seven were hired as per the MoE Tashkil and four were contracted teachers. Five teachers hold Grade 14 degrees and six were Grade 12 graduates who are enrolled for the in-service training in the Teacher Education Institute of Panjsher. The school teachers have attended all four of the INSET trainings and the Principal of the school attended both SMT 1 and 2.

Textbooks: In 1390 this school received books for Grades 1-9 but not complete sets; the same was true for 1391. The school principal said they provide one book for 3-4 students to share and some of the students purchase books from other provinces (mainly Kabul) as the commercial version is not available in Panjsher.

The content of the books is difficult for students to learn and also the physical quality is not good and the books cannot last for a long time. He added that the low number of books in school is a big challenge for them to teach and that they have requested additional books more than 20 times but yet have not received any.

School maintenance and infrastructure: The school infrastructure was in very bad condition. The building itself was good but as the number of classes were not enough one room is shared for two classes. The classes visited were class four and five in one room without any partition. From the setting of the class one could imagine that the quality of learning is low in this kind of class because the students cannot concentrate on their studies. The principal said that about four years ago MoE agreed to build another school with more classrooms but the work is not completed yet.

Main challenges and recommendations: The principal stated that the main challenges for the school:

1. Lack of professional teachers at the secondary level
2. Lack of classrooms resulting in the sharing of one room for two classes which reduces the quality of education
3. Lack of library, science lab and materials

His recommendations were:

1. MoE should support in-service training to upgrade the level of education of teachers and the teachers should be professional to teach the secondary level.
2. There is no monitoring from the MoE (Central Level), and the provincial monitoring has not solved the school's problems. He raised the problem of insufficient number of books and

classrooms as an example of lack of monitoring. He believes that if there is proper monitoring from the Central level then the needs will be fulfilled on time and the quality of education will not be affected

Annex 2. Percentage of unqualified teachers per province

Province	% unqualified teachers		Province	% unqualified teachers
Kabul City	30%		Baghlan	78%
Kapisa	48%		Khost	78%
Jawzjan	49%		Ghazni	80%
Laghman	57%		Herat	80%
Balkh	60%		Hilmand	81%
Nangarhar	60%		Bamyan	82%
Panjshir	63%		Nimroz	83%
Samangan	64%		Farah	87%
Badakhshan	64%		Zabul	88%
Parwan	70%		Paktia	88%
Kabul Province	70%		Sari Pul	89%
Faryab	70%		Kandahar	90%
Kunduz	72%		Badghis	92%
Takhar	73%		Uruzgan	95%
Logar	74%		Ghor	95%
Wardak	74%		Paktika	97%
Nuristan	74%		Daikondi	99%
Kunar	74%			

Annex 3. Percent of female teachers by province in 1390

Province	Number of teachers			% Female Teachers
	Male	Female	Total	
Badakhshan	6,382	3,001	9,383	32%
Badghis	1,696	257	1,953	13%
Baghlan	6,377	1,833	8,210	22%
Balkh	4,912	5,519	10,431	53%
Bamyan	2,543	641	3,184	20%
Daikondi	1,996	978	2,974	33%
Farah	1,751	841	2,592	32%
Faryab	4,648	1,815	6,463	28%
Ghazni	4,568	1,377	5,945	23%
Ghor	3,561	186	3,747	5%
Herat	7,309	6,732	14,041	48%
Hilmand	1,846	448	2,294	20%
Jawzjan	2,024	1,716	3,740	46%
Kabul City	5,715	16,957	22,672	75%
Kabul Province	3,308	1,512	4,820	31%
Kandahar	2,968	515	3,483	15%
Kapisa	2,339	439	2,778	16%
Khost	3,762	125	3,887	3%
Kunar	3,239	155	3,394	5%
Kunduz	4,336	1,663	5,999	28%
Laghman	3,379	239	3,618	7%
Logar	2,302	343	2,645	13%
Nangarhar	10,108	1,350	11,458	12%
Nimroz	595	691	1,286	54%
Nuristan	1,007	133	1,140	12%
Paktia	2,655	145	2,800	5%
Paktika	3,095	16	3,111	1%
Panjshir	762	192	954	20%
Parwan	4,952	786	5,738	14%
Samangan	1,464	535	1,999	27%
Sari Pul	2,165	859	3,024	28%
Takhar	5,109	2,064	7,173	29%
Uruzgan	1,219	67	1,286	5%
Wardak	3,874	257	4,131	6%
Zabul	519	49	568	9%
Total	118,485	54,436	172,921	31%

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