



LANDSCAPE MAPPING STUDY REPORT

Afghanistan | Maldives | Nepal

A Multi-Modal Approach to Teacher Professional Development to
Address Evolving Educational Changes in Low Resource Settings

Country Report - Afghanistan
2022



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**Country Report - Afghanistan
2022**

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ACRONYMS

AAT	Anglo-Afghan Treaty
ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
ANPDF	Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework
ATEP	Afghanistan Teacher Education Programme
BESAF	Better Education Systems for Afghanistan's Future
CATs	Continuous Assessment Tests
CBE	Community Based Education
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DTPD	Directorate of Teacher Professional Development
EdTech	Education Technology
EPM	Education Planning and Management
EQUIP:	Education Quality Improvement Programme
ESA	Education Sector Analyses
GATE:	Girl's Access to Teacher Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IARCSC	Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Service Commission
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IEA	Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
INSET	In-Service Education Training
IT	Information Technology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KEU	Kabul Education University
KII	Key Informant Interview
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MoICT	Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NESP	National Education Strategic Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NTP	Nation Training Programme
PBL	Project-Based Learning
PSS	Psychosocial Support
SCA	Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SMS	School Management Shura
TE	Teacher Education
TEs	Teacher Educators
TED	Teacher Education Directorate

TEMP:	Teacher Educators Master Programme
TEP	Teacher Education Programme
TISS	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TPGP	Teacher Professional Growth Plan
TTCs	Teacher Training Colleges
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
CETE	Centre of Excellence in Teacher
DTL	Distance Teaching and Learning

MATPD CONSORTIUM

The project, A Multimodal Approach to Teacher Professional Development in low resource settings (MATPD) is a collaborative endeavor. A South Asia collaboration of higher education institutions and a global non-profit entity, the consortium is addressing the poor quality of teacher professional development for distance teaching and learning through this project. Villa College, Maldives is the lead partner of the consortium. The Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) is the co-lead and knowledge partner for the proposed innovation; while the Swedish Committee of Afghanistan (SCA) is the third partner, implementing the project in Afghanistan. The learnings from TISS's award-winning and globally recognized initiatives on TPD developed in and for under-resourced and developing contexts will be adapted, piloted, and researched in Afghanistan, Maldives and Nepal.

Villa College is the first and largest private higher education institution in the Maldives offering a variety of academic programmes. The teacher training programmes offered by Villa College at the Faculty of Educational studies are known to be popular. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has been involved in the implementation of education projects that include capacity development, advocacy, and service delivery since 1984. The SCA Teacher training aims at building teachers' capacities in subject knowledge and pedagogy/ which are geared towards teacher professional development in short courses.

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India is among South Asia's premier research and teaching universities in social sciences. The Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education (CETE), an Independent Centre on the TISS Mumbai Campus engages in teaching, research, and field action, and has multidisciplinary expertise in the use of ICT in Education for quality reform at scale. CETE envisages its role as a "Catalyst for Transformation in Teacher Education" through multiple activities. The Centre has hosted several UNESCO award-winning field action research projects including Integrated.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Multi-Modal Approach to Teacher Professional Development in Low Resource Settings* project May 2021-Feb 2024 is jointly implemented by the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), the Villa College (VC) of the Maldives, that also serves as the consortium lead and the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) of India as the primary technical advisor.

Through the Landscape Mapping Study, the project aims to help us to identify the strengths and potential challenges/risks in implementation of TPD interventions, influence policies, practices, and ignite further quest for research in distance Teacher Professional Development (TPD) through the use of diverse technologies and modalities that are context-appropriate, combined with action research and social learning through the formation of Professional Learning Communities.

To enhance buy-in and support for the project, SCA held face-to-face and virtual meetings with Senior Education staff of the Ministry of Education Staff from the previous government and the de-facto-authorities that took power on August 15. Key issues of discussion included the rationale of the project, target provinces, target groups from SCA and the Ministry of Education and criteria for selection of Research Fellows.

In Afghanistan, the Landscape Mapping study was conducted at a critical time following the takeover of the former government on 15th August 2021, by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA). The IEA take-over of Afghanistan immediately led to freezing of the Afghanistan Central Bank reserves and funding from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), that included Education components. The global non recognition of the de-facto-authorities (DFA), the freezing of the bilateral funding and world bank funding to Afghanistan contributed to inflation, high cost of living and a cash crunch among other reasons.

As a result of the take-over from the former government among other challenges, the Education Sector in Afghanistan, remains at cross-roads with most senior government officers who used to work with the Ministries of Education and Higher Education having left the country, staying at home, or awaiting guidance on resumption of their positions in the Ministries. There is also a lack of a clear directive from the DFA on allowing women's full participation in the workforce¹ and stalled continuity of girls' education beyond grade 6.

Summary of key findings

Despite the first teacher training college (TTC) in Afghanistan, *Dare-al-Mallimeen* being established in 1912, there is need to reform and address the technical, delivery modes, systemic challenges, financing, coordination, equity, and gender gaps in the professional development of teacher educators and teachers in Afghanistan. Apart from the lack of one definitive TPD policy guidelines and literature in Afghanistan- Distance Learning, EdTech and action research are some of the other areas that need to be improved as part of enhancing TPD in Afghanistan.

Regrettably, Education in Afghanistan has been politicized. Protracted insecurity has negatively affected education delivery and Teacher Professional Development to a large extent. The country does also not have a conclusive policy specifically addressing Teacher Professional Development. While TTCs have been providing both in-service and pre-service programmes, there has been a gradual shift by the former government to focus more on pre-service teacher training.

Lack of an equitable distribution of teachers¹ across Afghanistan are some of the challenges faced by the education sector. To address this, there is need to increase the number of qualified teachers (women and men alike) by up to 30%. For a long time, cultural restrictions among women have been one of the challenges after poverty that prevent teachers, especially women, to participate in education and improve their professional development.

Subject content and pedagogy as some of the key focus areas for TPD in Afghanistan. Other key areas of focus include child-centred learning, mentorship, and coaching. However, to improve TPD, there should be more emphasis on-site support-based interventions rather than workshops. Teachers need to be trained on how to use formative assessment and student feedback to improve instruction. They should also be given effective, timely and actionable feedback by their superiors.

Despite the rapid development of technology uptake in Afghanistan, most of the teachers do not have access to the internet and they do not have access and are also unable to use ICT, especially among the poor and those in rural areas. Besides, ICT-related learning has mostly been taught theoretically in schools and TTCs. To improve access requires capital injection which is often lacking specifically for EdTech. Unfortunately, general education and teacher professional development in Afghanistan are highly dependent (49 percent) on donor support.

Lately, due to COVID-19 and political uncertainty in Afghanistan, there is need to use distance education modalities and various forms of education technology such as radio and TV to reach students and ensure continued TPD and learning among students.

¹ *Majority of female teachers are in cities*

INTRODUCTION TO THE MATPD PROJECT

A Multi-Modal Approach to Teacher Professional Development to Address Evolving Educational Changes in Low Resource Settings.

The MATPD project aims to influence policy, practice, and further research in distance Teacher Professional Development in South Asian countries.

Specific Objectives

- Generate knowledge about the enablers for an integrative distance teacher professional development model in low resource settings.
- Enhance the capacity of teacher educators and teachers by developing their leadership skills and knowledge in the constructive use of new media and technology to enhance their practices.
- To mobilize the support of and share insights with relevant stakeholders on adapting, adopting, and sustainability of pedagogically rich TPD approaches

Research Questions

The research questions will pave the way to delve deeper and progress towards the core intended outcomes of the initiative. They are as follows:

- How can Teacher Educators and Teachers be enabled to take ownership of adapting and adopting the proposed innovation along with the support of relevant stakeholders in the education system.
- What are the levers for and barriers to delivering pedagogically rich distance teaching and learning experiences at scale?
- How can media and technology be used to enhance and develop leadership skills in TEs and teachers?

Project Activities

The Project aims to implement elements of two innovative approaches on Teacher Professional Development (TPD) developed by the Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education (CETE), Tata Institute of Social Sciences. It is designed for under-resourced and developing contexts with a collaborative adaptation to suit the national contexts of the participating countries in South Asia (Afghanistan, Maldives, Nepal). With the usage of diverse technologies modalities for TPD that are context-appropriate and combined with action research and social change through the formation of Professional Learning Communities while building on the communities of practice that exist or get developed through mobile-based chat groups.

The main activities of the project are:

- I.** A Landscape Mapping Study will be organized in two stages. The first stage entails in-depth interviews with key informants in each country including policymakers, teacher educators, and teachers. The second stage comprises extensive secondary research on Teacher Professional Development. The study will help:
 - a. To inform the project's strategy, design, and activities.
 - b. To identify available resources and contextual factors that may impact implementation, discussion on adaptive management/risk mitigation strategies in case of a change in conditions.
- II.** Research fellows to undertake the training programme as well as carry out an Action Research Project. They will also be expected to record and analyze interventions with approximately 6-10 school teachers assigned to them.
- III.** A compendium of case studies/action research reports will be prepared based on the coursework of the research fellows mentioned in the previous activity. The compendium will present emerging insights and provide a deep dive into some of the reflections of the fellows based on the training program and peer-to-peer interactions.
- IV.** A guideline document comprising perspectives for policy and practice of distance TPD in the South Asian region will be developed.

Expected Outcomes

- Based on the analyses of comparative data, this study will generate knowledge relevant for improving the quality of Distance Teaching and Learning (DTL) in developing country contexts.
- Training for Teacher Educators (TEs) and teachers will enhance TEs' competency and skills as they will get an opportunity to engage in hands-on practices and knowledge sharing with teachers. This is in addition to the coursework on a meaningful integration of new media and technology for DTL, action research, design thinking, mentoring, and leadership.
- It will also foster the 21st-century skills of critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and digital literacy in learners, thereby, making space for iteration and dynamism in the TEs and teachers' practice.
- The case studies and action research reports will provide emerging insights and a deeper understanding of the reflections of the fellows based on the training programme and peer interactions. Also, it gives an opportunity for TEs to get authorship and showcase their work as a knowledge product.
- Lastly, the guideline document will supply a conscious observation and recommendations for governments and other stakeholders tasked and involved in distance teaching and learning.

Project Partners

The study is funded by International Development Research Center (IDRC) under the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange (GPE-KIX). The consortium comprises Villa College in the Maldives, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), and the Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education (CETE), Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India which serves as a technical partner.

Villa College is the first and largest private higher education institution in the Maldives offering a variety of academic programmes. Villa College has established a strong foothold in the Maldivian community and has a strong collaboration with international partners in the UK and Malaysia. The Institute of Research and Innovation at the college is a first of its kind in the country, dedicating itself to promote, undertake and foster research. The college has undertaken successful research projects for local clients and agencies such as the United Nations. It has also introduced Research grant schemes to provide opportunities for more people to undertake research. The teacher training programs offered at the Faculty of Educational studies are known to be popular. VC Faculty of Educational Studies have always had a role in contributing to the policy formulation, by attending and engaging in discussions with the Ministry of Education and National Institute of Education. It is one of the key institutes that provides an accessible education to all islands throughout the country via their Atoll Campuses or through the Outreach Learning centers.

The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has been operational in Afghanistan for over 35 years. Currently, SCA operates in 17 out of 34 provinces in Afghanistan. SCA'S presence in Afghanistan consists of the Kabul Management Office (KMO), five Regional Management Offices and three Liaison Offices. SCA receives funds from various international and private donors, mainly from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). With more than 6,000 Afghan employees, it is one of the largest organizations in Afghanistan. SCA implements education, health, and disability programmes in rural and remote areas through the Rights-Based Approach (RBA). It also builds the capacity of individuals and civil society organizations to enhance their capacity to advocate for their rights. SCA also supports the empowerment and rights of women throughout its programmes. SCA has been involved in the implementation of education projects that include capacity development, advocacy, and service delivery since 1984. Currently, the programme is being implemented in 745 districts across 14 provinces. Through the Education, Programme SCA aims to provide equal access to quality educational opportunities. SCA's Education Programme aspires to: Improve students' access to education and provide an inclusive learning environment for all children; Enhance effective teaching and quality in education; Support community-based organizations in target communities and professional associations to be more self-organized, representative, and fulfill their responsibilities in the promotion of, and advocacy for accountable and responsive education services and; Provide support to Education authorities to enable them to have the required capacity to ensure sustainable, inclusive and effective education services in Afghanistan. The SCA Teacher training is probably the most important part of the SCA Education Programme intervention. It aims at building teachers' capacities in subject knowledge and pedagogy/ which are geared towards teacher professional development in short courses. Teacher Educator Master Programme (TEMP) is another activity under SCA teachers' capacity development. The focus of TEMP is teacher educators drawn from all over the country.

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India is among South Asia's premier research and teaching universities in social sciences. The Centre of Excellence in Teacher Education (CETE), an Independent Centre on the TISS Mumbai Campus engages in teaching, research, and field action, and has multidisciplinary expertise in the use of ICT in Education for quality reform at scale. It has designed the TPD innovations whose elements will be piloted in this project. Centre was awarded the UNESCO King Hamad Prize for Excellence in Use of ICTs in Education in 2018 for its flagship initiative connected learning initiative as well as the OER Award.

The leadership team for the MATPD project is as follows:

- Principal Investigator: Ms. Fathimath Saeed (Villa College, Maldives)
- Country Lead Investigators: Dr. Ruchi Kumar (TISS, India), Mr. Mohammad Tahir Ismat (SCA, Afghanistan)
- Convener, Steering Committee: Ms. Dhvani Bafna, TISS India
- Advisors: Prof. Ajay Singh, IGNOU, India
- Research Team Anchors: Ms. Reema Govil (TISS, India), Dr. Aishath Nasheeda (Village College, Maldives), Mr. Charles Osaka Kesa and Mohammad Sadiq Dehzad (SCA, Afghanistan).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The landscape mapping for the 3 countries (Afghanistan, Maldives, and Nepal) was done based on primary data gathered from interviews and literature drawn from secondary research.

An extensive interview schedule was developed collaboratively by TISS, SCA, and Villa College. The discussion tool enabled us to understand the teacher education ecosystem in the country with a specific focus on Teacher Professional Development and its various facets. Concepts of action research, mentoring, use of ICT, distance education, and inclusion were explored within the context of Teacher Professional Development. A significant area that was looked into was the professional development of teacher educators.

We interviewed a total of 7 stakeholders from diverse backgrounds across the country. These comprise government functionaries, teacher training institutes, teachers, non-profit organizations, funding agencies, and consultants working in the space of teacher education.

The literature reviewed documents for landscape mapping comprised policy documents, budget documents, reports on education plans and programs, ministry websites, research papers, impact study reports, blogs, newspaper articles, case studies, and reports/documents shared by interview respondents amongst others to understand the country profile and context, data on various programs/initiatives around TPD and specifically during the covid-19 pandemic, gaps in teacher education & TPD practices, policies around TPD, data on finances /investment for school education and TPD, etc.

To ensure social inclusion, equity, and diversity during the Landscape Mapping exercise, SCA held discussions process based on purposive and convenience sampling and interviewed men and women from different backgrounds, language orientations, provinces, and regions- Northwest, South West, and South East - who are either national of Afghanistan or working in Afghanistan. The interviews were carried out in English, Pashto, and Dari among experienced Afghan nationals from different provinces who understand the socio-political, economic, and cultural dynamics of different regions in Afghanistan

Experienced education, research, curriculum, teacher educators, and education programme managers were interviewed virtually or through face-to-face meetings during the Landscape Mapping Study. The interviews were conducted as below:

- a) The total number of people interviewed is 7 (5 men & 3 women).
- b) Two of the interviews were done in person (face-to-face) while 5 of them were conducted virtually.

Some of the challenges the project faced during the Landscape Mapping exercise included securing confirmation with finality from some identified interviewees to participate in the interviews for unknown reasons, delays in finalizing interviews, cancellations of meetings, and rescheduling of planned interviews. These challenges may have been due to the prevailing political challenges and conditions in Afghanistan. Despite these challenges, interviews for the landscape mapping study were conducted.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Geography and Demographic context

Afghanistan is a landlocked country situated at the hub of South Asia and Central Asia. It has a population of approximately 39.8 million people (UNFPA,2021). Afghanistan shares a border with Pakistan to the south and east; with Iran to the west; with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan to the north and China in the far north-east. Afghanistan covers a landmass of 652,864 Square Kilometres. The Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Baluch, Turkmen, Nuristani, Pamiri, Arab, Gujar, Brahui, Qizilbash, Aimaq, and Pashai are among the country’s diverse ethnic composition. Pashto and Dari are Afghanistan’s official languages. The capital of Afghanistan, Kabul, has an estimated population of 4.5 million persons. Islam is the dominant religion.

Afghanistan’s geographical features include mountain ranges, steep plateaus, deserts, rivers, lakes, and forests. The climatic conditions range from summer, spring, autumn, and winter.



Political context

The Anglo-Afghan Treaty (AAT) of 1919 led to the end of the Third Anglo Afghanistan War. The treaty was signed on 8 August 1919 in Rawalpindi by the United Kingdom and the Emirate of Afghanistan. In the Treaty, Britain recognized Afghanistan’s independence and agreed that British India would not extend past the Khyber Press. To a large extent Education in Afghanistan has been affected by politics, especially girls’ education. Attached is an

abridged annex showing key highlights and timelines in Afghanistan’s history – all with varying effects on Education.

Economic Context

Even before the collapse of the previous government, Afghanistan’s economic growth was slow and weak due to worsening insecurity, severe drought, and the effects of COVID-19. Due to sanctions imposed after the Taliban take over, the financial sector has been facing significant constraints such as reduced trade volumes, low liquidity, difficulties in processing international transactions, banking restrictions on corporate and individual accounts, and reluctance by some offshore banks to engage in transactions to and out of the country. The direct and indirect financial difficulties have led to some development and non-governmental organizations, including those working in the education sector, to limit or close activities despite existing needs.

The combined effect of a worsening economic crisis has led to significant rise in the portion of the population living below the poverty line due to the rising cost of living, rise in the cost of commodities, inflation, and unemployment. This situation will affect the budgetary allocations to

Education, including Teacher Education, reduce opportunities for teacher professional development and indirectly contribute to lowering teachers' morale and increasing the likelihood of students dropping out of school altogether.

United States remains the single largest provider of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan. The total US humanitarian aid in Afghanistan and to Afghan refugees in the region has been approximately \$782 million since October 2020².

Technological Context

In Afghanistan, IT and the software industry is gradually on the rise - this includes an increase in technology start-ups and pilots. The number of Afghan software developers, especially in the private sectors has also increased³. However, despite the improvement, there is still limited infrastructure to support use of technology in education, among teachers and among students in the classroom. In many parts of the country, schools do not have access to power, internet and most teachers are not tech savvy. However, the

Improved penetration of smart phones provides a window for improving use of technology in education.

For example, the Asia Foundation developed an Android mobile-based app, with age-appropriate workbooks, to improve primary level reading skills for students grades 1-3 in Pashto and Dari languages that was piloted in four schools (*comprised of 3,440 students*) in more than 90 classrooms. According to the Asia Foundation, technology can be an instrument to help Afghanistan's education sector develop further⁴. However, even with technology, the quality of instruction in classrooms remains key in improving students learning outcomes. In 2017, members of a girls' robotics team from Afghanistan participated in a competition in Washington. The team also won an award at a major competition in Estonia⁵. The brain drains to other countries being experienced now may, however, negatively affect the development and sustenance of EdTech in Education.

In the coming years, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) remains committed to piloting and scaling up various EdTech practices and innovations in Afghanistan that will involve the training of teachers in use of EdTech.

Legal Context

At national level, the implementation of Education is guided by the Education Law⁶. The Education Law

2 <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/jan-11-2022-usaid-announces-308-million-humanitarian-assistance-afghanistan>

3 <https://medium.com/codeweekend/software-development-in-afghanistan-90ddd448d70?source=-----0----->

4 <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/can-technology-change-education-landscape-afghanistan?msclkid=3a9764d5abea11ec8d8c68aef9c65c56>

5 <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/29/world/afghanistan-girls-robotics.html>

6 https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/afghanistan_education_law.pdf

provides for Equal Rights to education without any kind of discrimination. For example, chapter six on Teachers' Training and provides highlights on the objectives of the Teacher's Training that include the need to increase the number of professional teachers and lecturers. While chapter seven highlights the establishment of the Center for Educational and Training Technology and the objectives thereof. These include a) Enhancement of the teachers and lecturers' level of academic and professional knowledge and practical skills in science, mathematics, and information technology and b) Use and application of educational and training technology and providing appropriate teaching resources in science, mathematics, and information technology.

Following the take-over, it is anticipated that in the coming years the curriculum will be guided by Sharia⁷.

Impact of the COVID 19 pandemic

Despite the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the country oscillated between the closing of schools and continuing with the delivery of education through a variety of measures – mainly self-study and small group teaching. During the first half of 2021 COVID-19 slowed the implementation of education programme activities. Staff movement to the field was greatly impacted.

By April 2021, COVID-19 infection rates had reached record highs, with less than 5% of the population fully vaccinated. During Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 of 2021, Afghanistan experienced the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, with cases rising exponentially since the beginning of April 2021. By June 2021 there was a devastating outbreak and spread of COVID-19 in the country, further raising concerns about the spread of the highly transmissible Delta variant. However, towards the beginning of December 2021, the positivity rate had dropped to 8% with slightly over 1.5 million people having been vaccinated to stem the spread of COVID-19. At one point, all 34 provinces recorded a positivity rate of about 48 percent.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) supported the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop an Alternative Education Plan (AEP) in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The plan had three learning options: self-learning, distance learning, and small learning groups. A distance learning website was set up and TV and radio lessons were developed and broadcast. However, these options could only benefit the few who had the necessary technology at home. However, there was no guarantee that learning would take place nor was there any follow-up and reporting on the implementation⁸. MoE also promised to put in place plans to enhance access to education through technology, distance learning, and online education in the long run.

Several organizations, including SCA continued to implement small group and whole grade teaching among target students while maintaining social distancing. Key lessons learned included need for contingency planning and the availability of financial resources to mitigate against emerging COVID-19

7 <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/afghan-ministry-of-education-to-change-curriculum-as-per-sharia-laws20210913144110/>

8 Based on a Case study done by UNICEF and UNISCO in June 2021

variants, ensure schools remain open while minimizing the risk of students and teachers contracting and spreading COVID-19. The mitigation measures to ensure continuity of education included the use of distance education and various forms of education technology such as radio and TV.

Landscape Mapping Study

The Landscape study is intent on generating knowledge on current status, issues, practices, policies, teacher education and teacher professional development in Afghanistan, Nepal, and the Maldives. The landscape mapping study consisted of two main components: In-depth interviews with policymakers and educators, and an extensive secondary literature review.

As part of reaching out to duty bearers and other education stakeholders, SCA held meetings and discussions with Ministry of Education Staff from previous government then working in the Teacher Professional Directorate (TPD) and some officials from the current De-Facto-Authorities (DFA) for a buy in of the project and continuation of the Landscape Mapping Study without any hindrances.

To ensure social inclusion, equity, and diversity during the Landscape Mapping exercise, SCA held discussions process based on purposive and convenience sampling method and interviewed men and women from diverse backgrounds, language orientations, provinces, and regions - *Northwest, Southwest, and Southeast* - who are either national of Afghanistan or working in Afghanistan. The interviews were carried out in English, Pashto, and Dari among experienced Afghan nationals from different provinces who understand the socio-political, economic, and cultural dynamics of different regions in Afghanistan.

Experienced educationists in teacher education, research and curriculum, teacher educators, and education programme managers were interviewed virtually or through face-to-face meetings during the Landscape Mapping Study included:

- a) Former and current Ministry of Education Officers from the Teacher Professional Directorate (TPD)-
- b) Teacher Educators from Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs)
- c) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
- d) Head of the National Teacher Elected Council (NTEC) Leads
- e) International Non-governmental organizations (INGOs) Education Staff managing or implementing education projects in Afghanistan and
- f) Swedish Committee for Afghanistan staff

The literature reviewed for landscape mapping comprised policy documents, budget documents, Education strategic plans and programs, UNICEF and UNESCO reports and websites, research papers, news agencies reports, case studies, reports/documents shared by interview respondents amongst others to understand the country profile and context, data on various programs/initiatives around TPD and specifically during covid-19 pandemic, gaps in teacher education & TPD practices, policies around TPD, data on finances /investment for school education and TPD etc.

Some of the challenges the project faced during the Landscape Mapping exercise included securing

confirmation with finality from some identified interviewees to participate in the interviews for unknown reasons, delays in finalizing interviews, cancellations of meetings, and rescheduling of planned interviews. These challenges may have been due to the prevailing political challenges and conditions in Afghanistan. Despite these challenges, interviews for the landscape mapping study were conducted and the secondary literature review was completed as planned.

Tools used during the Landscape Mapping exercise were developed and finalized by consortium members. Secondary data and Information are drawn mainly from key reference documents such as the Afghanistan Education Law, Afghanistan Education Sector Analysis (ESA), National Education Strategic Plans, Education Policies, guidelines and frameworks and other publications related to education and TPD.

From the discussions, interviews, and review of secondary literature, it is clear that some of the progress and challenges within the education sector in Afghanistan today are deeply rooted in conservative beliefs of individuals, households, and government. This includes the challenges girls and women face in accessing and participating in education.

As a follow-up of the Landscape Mapping, SCA has already selected 14 women and men drawn from the Ministry of Education and SCA as Research Fellows to participate in the project.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Historical background of education in Afghanistan

In the ancient past, Afghanistan was a primary site for many important historic civilizations and religions. (Shirzai, n.d). Popal (2009) states that, the ancient Aryana, Khorasan of the Middle Ages, and current Afghanistan have been the cradle of science and knowledge since ancient times.

Before the emergence of Islam in Ariana, education was carried out by the religions Vedic, Zoroastrian, and Buddhism civilizations. Then, education was religious in nature. Aristotle's logic, philosophy, astronomy, and Greek medicine were the educational contents, and they were taught in the temples, and king palaces. These periods continued until the advent of Islam. Islamic tradition influenced all aspects of Afghan society including education at all levels.

During the lifetime and tenure of Ahmad Shah Abdali (1747-1772), he paid attention to education and intellectual development through Mosque schools. The focus of education, then, was Islamic education, culture, and tradition. Up to the period of Ahmad Shah Baba, the whole system of education was informal. Formal education received its formal shape and structure in Afghanistan during Amir Sher Ali Khan's reign from 1868 to 1878 (Kamgar, 2002).

Amir Sher Ali Khan founded a public school (Semi-modern class-based school) in Kabul in two forms *Madrasa-i-Nizami* (Military school) and *Madrasa-i-Mulki* (Public) in 1878. The schools recruited young male graduates of the *Maktab* (Masjid taught children) and trained them either in military or

civilian affairs to provide service to the government. Students in military schools lived in dormitories supported and financed by the government. In public schools, most of the students came from high-ranking government families (Kamgar 2002; Husham 2015). Sherzad (2017) states that in these two different schools' traditional education was combined with some curricular and structured aspects of modern education.

Habibullah Khan (1901-1919) consolidated the power of the monarchy by bringing education under the control of the government and away from the Mullahs. In the year 1903, the first high school of the modern or western type, *Habibiya* was founded in Kabul and was open to the public (Samadi 2001, 2). Khan also founded a primary school in Kabul (1909) to teach Quran, theology, and *Tafseer*, arithmetic, civics, calligraphy, geometry, and Persian. In 1912 he founded a teacher training school. During this year, all the teachers and administrative authorities were from India and Afghanistan (Khwajamir, 2015); Hussain Zada, n.d), (Kamgar 2002). Soon after, many primary, secondary and teacher training institutes were established in different parts of the country. Unfortunately, only boys could attend these schools.

Amanullah Khan's government (1919-1929) paid special attention to modern education and established western type schools in Kabul and elsewhere in the provinces. The Ministry of Education was established in 1922 to oversee education. During this time, the first constitution was established – Basic education was made compulsory, mandatory and free of charge for all children including boys and girls in Afghanistan. Education was a government responsibility. The government, under the Ministry of Education, sponsored hundreds of students to study in Russia, Italy, and Germany. Some girls were sent to study in Turkey.

The budget of the Ministry of Education was increased and made the largest after the budgets of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice. The opening of girl schools by Amanullah Khan and the sending of female students to study in Turkey did not appease Islamic scholars. The opposition from the Islamic Scholars forced Amanullah Khan to go into exile way from Afghanistan. This paved way for Habibullah Kalakani to take over.

For the nine months Habibullah Kalakani was in power in 1929, there was intense conflict between *modernists* and *conservative tribal leaders* in Afghanistan (Yazdani, 2020). Most schools closed, and women were prohibited from accessing schooling (Kamgar 2002; Kazim 2005; Samadi 2001). Aspects of this conflict in education can be felt up to today, 2022.

The reign of Nader Shah (1929-1933) saw the spread of primary schools across the country. The constitution of 1931 provided for mandatory education for both women and men. Primary education was compulsory and free. The government recognized religious instruction as the most important part of education (Popal, 2019). Mosque schools' control was returned to *mullahs*. Between 1931-1948, girls' education remained restricted. Nadir Shah was murdered in 1933 and his young son Zahir Shah became the King of Afghanistan (Yazdani, 2020).

Under Zahir Shah (1933-1973), education gradually expanded. During this period, 43 schools were established throughout Afghanistan (16 in Kabul and 27 in the provinces). Zahir Shah also founded the University of Kabul in 1947. Many other teacher training institutes were also built in Kabul. During this

period, many students were supported to pursue higher education. Girls were encouraged to attend school, offered educational opportunities, and required to wear the veil at school (Husham 2015; Kamgar 2002; Samadi 2001).

When Mohammad Dawood Khan came to power there was further expansion of primary and secondary education. However, the 1979 revolution against his government negatively affected education. Educational institutions were turned into barracks and ward centres. Many students and teachers were imprisoned or left the country.

Education faced various funding challenges during the Taliban period of 1996-2001. Women's education was banned and all-girls schools except for the Kabul medical faculty were closed. During this period only 10-15% of primary school-aged children had access to schools. After the Taliban, Hamid Karzai (2001-14) proclaimed education as a national priority during the onset of his rule. Education from grade one-nine was compulsory for all children. Bachelor-level education at university was also made free of charge. The compulsory and free nature of education led to a rapid expansion of basic education and enrolment in TTCs. The government also allowed the private sector to engage in the delivery of education.

Currently, 17,780 schools (public and private) are existing for general education in the country, with the 9,966,971 enrolled students, which are teaching by 234,022 (91,784 women) teachers (students, teachers and school statistics, Data Sets, MoE 2021).

Now that the Taliban are back in power, the world is watching to see how the status of education in the country unfolds.

TEACHER EDUCATION HISTORY

The first teacher training college (TTC) in Afghanistan, *Dare-al-Mallimeen* was established in 1912. Later, another TTC was established where primary school teacher graduates were enrolled. In 1964 two additional TTCs were established *Dar-al-Malimeen Aali* (Sayed Jamaluddin Afghan TTC) and the Teacher Training Academy (Goddard, Bakhshi 2018). Graduates from these TTCs were only able to teach primary and secondary students. To address teacher quality in primary and secondary schools, the ministry of education developed a plan to enhance teacher training. In 2002 a Comprehensive Need Assessment of the education sector was conducted by different stakeholders including the interim Afghan Administration, World Bank, UNICEF, UNESCO, and the Asian Development Bank. The assessment recommended the need to shore up support to teacher professional development and the introduction of a modern TTC curriculum (Goddard, Bakhshi 2018).

The Afghanistan Teacher Education Program (ATEP) was the first concerted effort, on behalf of all donors, in the teacher training sector to develop a coordinated and integrated response to assist the Ministry of Education in achieving its goals for teacher development (Intili & Kissam, 2008). The goal was to enhance the technical and professional capacity of teachers with focus on content and

pedagogy.

In Afghanistan, the Teacher Education Directorate (TED) which is recently renamed to Teacher Professional Development Directorate is responsible for national teacher training policies and programmes. The TED also manages and provides academic advice to TTCs across the 34 provinces of Afghanistan. It is also responsible for academic guidance to these colleges. There are plans to establish an Academy of Teacher Training as part of the TED. This academy will be responsible for coordinating in-service teacher training in the country and further devolve teacher training to districts and school levels. Currently, TTCs award diploma certificates to successful grade 9 and 12 candidates after they complete a five-year and a two-year teacher education course respectively.

Currently, there are 42 central government-run Teacher Training Colleges, 217 Teacher Development Centers at district level, and 83 private run TTCs offering Teacher Professional Development across Afghanistan (students, teachers and school statistics, Data Sets, MoE 2021). These TTCs offer pre-service teacher training. All TTCs have a training centre, library, science laboratories, audio-visual and radio equipment, and conferencing facilities. The extent of these facilities and services varies considerably from one TTC to another (Azam et al., 2014). In addition to the government-supported TTCs, individual TTCs are supported by different organizations and donor agencies such as UNICEF and USAID, among others. The informants also concurred that the Ministry of Education is the main custodian of TPD in Afghanistan.

Policy and Reforms

While there are several national and international documents that Afghanistan relates to in the implementation of Education, there is no one conclusive policy specifically addressing TPD – the rationale for this may be that TPD co-relates with other thematic areas in education in areas such as inclusion, provision of teaching and learning materials and student performance. According to one of the key informants interviewed, TTCs in Afghanistan have guidelines that regulate their management. This includes guidance on the implementation of a credit system. These guidelines and procedures are reviewed and changed by MoE from time to time.

Some of the relevant laws, policies, and guidelines that refer to TPD / Teacher training in Afghanistan include the Education Law of 2008 and the National Education Strategic Plan 2006-2010 (NESP I) whose focus was on rebuilding the education system of Afghanistan. Under this NESP, one of the goals was to build a national cadre of qualified school teachers to improve the learning achievement of all students.

Under the National Education Strategic Plan (2010 – 2014) priority programme areas directly related to TPD include: Curriculum Development; Teacher Education and Science and Technology Education; Technical and Vocational Education; and Training and Education Management. In the subsequent National Education Strategic Plan- III (2017 – 2021), key areas that directly related to TPD included *Quality and relevance*, and to some extent *Efficient and transparent management*.

Under the draft, National Education Strategic Plan (NESP IV: 2021-2030) the Teachers' Element was

highlighted as one of the key component areas. The draft NESP indicates that the low quality of teachers (Only 72% of teachers have grade 14 and above qualifications) and lack of an equitable distribution of teachers⁹ across Afghanistan are some of the challenges faced by the education sector. Should the Draft be approved, it is expected that there will be an equitable distribution of teachers across Afghanistan, a new Teacher Policy finalized and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of teachers enhanced.

Below are some of the planned policy reforms related to the professional development of teachers and the enhancement of distance education¹⁰.
a) Increase the professional skills of teachers
b) Creation of biometric and biographic data of nearly all the teachers and personnel of the ministry of education
c) Decentralization of decision-making that has constrained local schools and education departments to provide quality and innovative services to students
d) Improve access to Higher Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)
e) Improve faculty and staff's capacity by securing scholarship and higher education opportunities within the country for university teachers
f) Increase the number of qualified teachers by 30%
g) Upgrade 90,000 existing teachers with 14 years of education to undergraduate degrees
h) Upgrade the educational degrees of 47,000 grade 12 graduate teachers to grade 14 and bachelor levels
i) increase in the number of female teachers by 5% (from 37% in 2019 to 42% by 2025)
j) Finalize the teacher training policy, and recruit 65,000 qualified teachers across the country
k) Approve regulation on distance education
l) Revise the national infrastructure plan to accelerate access to reliable electric power and internet to enhance access to education through distance learning

As mentioned earlier, several years ago, MoE stopped offering formal pre-service teacher education and training offered by TTCs. The pre-service teacher education and training was reserved for universities such as the Kabul Education University (KEU) on yearly basis. These universities produce graduate teachers annually after four years of training. The TTCs were required to focus on in-service training of teachers. Considering that the education system requires qualified teachers yet over 40% of the teachers already employed by MoE only have grade 12 level of education, there is an urgent need to enhance the in-service professional development of these teachers to enable them to qualify as professional teachers since MoE cannot replace them.

However, according to one of the key informants, while the need to pause the pre-service teacher training in response to former president Ghani's push to professionalize the pre-service teacher training from TTCs to universities was well-intended and great in the long run, it was a huge mistake since the few universities were not adequately prepared to deliver quality pre-service teacher education in Afghanistan. Although some universities continue to offer pre-service teacher education and training, it remains on a small-scale basis and is unable to urgently meet the need to professionalize the

⁹ Majority of female teachers are in cities

¹⁰ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF II) 2021 To 2025:

teaching needs in the country.

In the past, the government ran a series of six different national-level in-service pieces of training (INSETs) for teachers. Each INSET focused on different thematic areas including pedagogy, subject content, planning, teaching resources, inclusion, and administration-related topics.

University graduates who do not have a degree related to education can be trained for 2 years before graduating with a post-graduate in education. Under such a programme, teacher trainees are required complete 96 credits. The credits are drawn from among subject areas such as mathematics, teaching, pedagogy, and psychology. The credit system also applies to pre-service teacher training (Rah, 2022).

Another key informant interviewed indicated that it is only about 10% of teachers in Afghanistan are university graduates with 43% being grade 12 graduates. The KII, further stated that to improve the quality of education in Afghanistan, it is important to first train teachers in lower grades on pedagogy and later to train subject specialists with a focus on higher grades. While it is important to ensure all teachers are trained, there are limitations to achieving this such as a lack of adequate budgetary allocations by the government, yet even those who have graduated from university, have limited employment opportunities. While some key informants interviewed indicated that there are policies that relate to TPD, some were of the view that it is not about the shortage of policies related to TPD but the actual implementation and follow up.

Administration of education

The organizational structure of the schools in Afghanistan:

There are two ministries largely responsible for overseeing education in Afghanistan- The Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Higher Education oversees coordination, expansion, and regulation of institutions offering grade 13, higher and tertiary. MoHE is also responsible for graduate teachers' pre-service and in-service teacher training and the development of the national higher education curriculum. It also supports and promotes further education for university faculty members and develops linkages and partnerships with international universities¹¹.

The Ministry of Education is primarily responsible for policy formulation relating to preschool, grade 1-12, education, pre- and in-service teacher education, Teacher Training Colleges, and supervision of education in the levels mentioned above. The Ministry of Education implements different programmes under General Education, Islamic Education, Curriculum Development and Teacher Education, Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Literacy, and Education Administration Development. Both the MoE and MoHE are responsible for developing their own curriculum, testing, and certification of their graduates.

Provincial/District Education Directorates and offices are responsible for education management and

11 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Education_\(Afghanistan\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Education_(Afghanistan))

delivery at the provincial and district levels. However, they are accountable to provincial and district governors and the Ministry of Education headquarters. Heads of education centres, schools, and institutes are responsible for the daily management and delivery of education with support from the District Education Office and School Management Shuras.

Element seven of the Draft NESP IV (2021-2030) relates to School Management and Leadership. By 2021, only a small percentage of school principals had the management and administrative capacity to lead schools. The majority of these school principals had limited financial, management, curriculum interpretation, capacity, and supervision skills. Standards and Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for schools are also not defined. This makes it difficult to measure success rates.

Some expected results, key strategies, and planned actions to improve school-level management and administration
a) School principals to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education management
b) Support school principals to improve their knowledge, skills, and attitudes in school management and accountability principles
c) MoE to develop a system for schools and school principal's appraisal and performance rating

Education Financing

Despite the achievements in the education sector in the last two decades such as the steady rise of the teaching force from 27% in 2017 (143,000) to 36% in 2018 (226,000), the education sector still faces significant challenges such as inadequate financing. In Afghanistan, education financing is highly dependent on foreign aid. External funding represents approximately 49% of the country's education expenditure. This funding includes bilateral and multilateral support to the Ministry of Education. By 2019, government expenditure on education had gradually risen to 3.9% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). With current political changes in the country, there is a high risk of a significant reduction in education financing through the government.

Government financing of TPD remains minimal. To address this gap, bilateral, multilateral, and INGOs have been directly financing the TPD they support in the target areas they work. An example of this is the financing of the Teacher Education Master Programme (TEMP) which is funded by Sida through the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan. Since the beginning of the TEMP project implemented by SCA in collaboration with the former Ministry of Education and two universities- Karlstad University, Sweden between 2011 – 2015 and the Tata Institute for Social Sciences (TISS) between 2018- 2020, a total of 102 (Women 30; Men 72) teacher educators have graduated with a Master of Arts (MA) degree in teacher education.

TEACHER EDUCATION

Overview of Teacher Education *(shift in TE over last 5-10 years, focus area of govt, challenges and gaps in TE)*

The country lacks adequate professional and skillful women and men teachers. According to the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF II, 2021-2025), the percentage of qualified teachers has steadily increased at all levels and is estimated to reach around 80% by end of 2018. By 2020/2021, the teacher-to-student ratio in Afghanistan stood at over 45 students per teacher with the ministry of education indicating a shortfall of around 65,000 teachers.

Like in all countries, teacher education is an important element of education. In Afghanistan, teacher education and training education takes place in teacher training colleges (TTCs). Public TTCs are managed by the Ministry of Education. Interested grade 12 graduates who are admitted to TTCs are trained for two years. Upon completion and certification, these teachers can teach students in grades one to nine (Samady, 2013). While TTCs used to provide both in-service and pre-service programmes, there has been a shift to focusing on pre-service teacher training in recent years. The shift is also corroborated by a key informant who indicated during an interview that pre-service teacher training programmes in Kunar province had been officially halted by the previous government some years back and that the focus of TTCs is in in-service teacher training. Nonetheless, she indicated that in a separate arrangement, one UN agency (UNICEF), got exceptional approval from the previous president to implement a pre-service project for girls in TTCs under the Girls Access to Teacher Education (GATE).

Between 2019-2021, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and UNICEF planned to train more than 365 female teachers. Another 130 women teachers who had earlier already graduated from the GATE project. The thinking is that with more women teachers, parents are more likely to send their daughters to school. In the coming years, UNICEF plans to train 4,500 more women teachers under the same project with the aim of expanding community-based education (CBE), especially for girls and other vulnerable and excluded children in some of the most underserved areas. Both public and private universities in Afghanistan also offer a four-year teacher education degree course to grade 12 graduates willing to become professional teachers.

With all good intentions, the Afghanistan national education strategic plan (NESP 2017-2021) indicates the existing gap between the school curriculum and teacher education curriculum. To address this gap, the then Ministry of Education indicated the need to review teacher guidebooks and reform the teacher education curriculum to make it competency-based to enable teachers to adequately respond to the needs of school curricula at various levels. Another reform directed at improving the delivery of teacher education is administering competency-based examinations for teacher trainees in TTCs.

Providers of Teacher Education

Both the ministries of education and higher education have the overall responsibility of providing teacher education in Afghanistan. Teacher education is offered in both private and public teacher training colleges and universities. UN agencies such as UNICEF and UNESCO. Since 2002, UNESCO and its Afghan and international partners have supported the government in the nationwide reform of education. The support has included the development of National Strategies for Education, the first-ever National Institute for Educational Planning, conducting various education sector analyses (ESA), Education Curriculum reform, and strategic planning for higher education.

As part of improving education planning and management in Afghanistan, UNESCO has over the years supported the Ministries of Education and Higher Education by building the capacity of over 700 planning officers across all 34 provinces. To ensure sustainability and ownership of the programme, MoE established a national team of education and planning experts. The team consisted of the education and planning experts from Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Teacher Education, Curriculum Development, and the Kabul University of Education.

Below is a list of partners that have supported teacher education in the last decade:

- National Training Programme (NTP) in educational planning and management (EPM), MoE-IIEP, 2012 to 2014
- Sustainable Capacity Development in Education Sector Planning Project, Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), 2010-2014
- Phase two of NTP, from 2015 to 2018, supported by MoE-IIEP
- Capacity Development for Educational Planning and Management Project III, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), 2015-2018
- Improvement of the quality and implementation of the NTP through the Better Education Systems for Afghanistan's Future (BESAF) programme, Sida, UNESCO Kabul Office, and IIEP, 2018-2022.

Teacher education is also provided by I/NGOs like the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) also provides teacher education. Over the years SCA has been conducting short-term capacity-building workshops for teachers on the subject matter, teacher competencies, child-centered pedagogy, mentorship support, Project-Based Learning (PBL), psychosocial support (PSS), development, and management of teacher circles, child rights, inclusive education, and special education.

While MoE administers and regulates TTCs, Universities and other institutions of higher learning are administered and regulated by the Ministry of Higher Education. As mentioned earlier, apart from TTCs and government universities other private agencies also support education. For example, in 2014, the American University of Afghanistan started a teacher professional development programme (TPD) programme in Afghanistan to promote the academic and pedagogical skills of teacher educators (Teachers Education in the Global Era, 2020). Other collaborating agencies that have supported the professional development of teachers include the Academic Council on Education, USAID, World

Bank, and JICA. Apart from the long-term plan to enhance teacher education in Afghanistan there are plans in place to initiate a rapid, country-wide in-service teacher training programme and setting up Teacher Resource Centres at sub-district levels.

To the left is a diagram showing the different units that were under the previous Directorate of Teacher Education under the MoE. As part of the MoE's re-organization and re-alignment, there are plans to formally rename the department in charge of teacher education as the Directorate of Teacher Professional Development (DTPD).

Enrolment in TTCs in Afghanistan is guided by pre-determined criteria established to admit students and teachers in both pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes. MoE has also established criteria for the establishment of private TTCs and a credit system for teacher education centres. For example, a student is required to complete 96-100 credits during his/her two years (four semesters) teacher education programme. A key informant interviewed indicated that part of the credit system emphasizes on student participation and practical work. The Ministry of Education has also developed a framework for licensing teachers at different levels under DTPD, but this is hardly implemented. The framework indicates that for a teacher to be licensed he/she must be a graduate of a TTC. During a KII, a respondent indicated that currently, any university graduate can participate in a teacher qualification exam, and if they qualify, they can be recognized as qualified teachers.

The KII respondent, further indicated that it is the responsibility of Heads of TTCs to monitor and uphold the quality of teacher education in their institutions. Besides, TTCs and teacher educators are monitored by officers from the teacher education directorate (TED) from time to time. Part of the monitoring visits includes observing teacher educators teaching and evaluating their performance based on an observation checklist.

Some key informants interviewed indicated that subject content and pedagogy as some of the key focus areas for TPD in Afghanistan. Other key areas of focus mentioned by informants included handling large classes, active and child-centered learning, mentorship, coaching, and action research. However, there needs to also focus on student assessment with more focus on formative assessment.

As part of improving its teacher training and professional development of teachers it supports in Afghanistan, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan came up with a draft of recommendations in 2021 that would benefit other Teacher Professional Development (TPD) providers in low and middle resource settings. According to SCA, teachers are **the single most important school-based determinant of student learning**. Poor and ineffective professional development of teachers hurts teachers, students, communities, and the nation. It hurts communities since quality education correlates to economic growth. When educators learn and put into practice skills learned skills, their students learn even more.

Below is a raft of recommendations by SCA to improve teacher professional development in Afghanistan.

A: Staffing

1. Recruit Professional Teacher Educators with extensive teaching experience to support Teacher Professional Development
2. Teachers should create linkage with mutually agreed instructional coaches. These coaches are often outside the teachers' line of supervision.

B: Design and continuity

1. Teachers' backgrounds, experience levels, or learning needs should be considered in the planning and designing of their professional learning.
2. Focus and support teachers in the most remote, resource-poor, and crisis-affected areas
3. Entrust professional development in critical areas such as literacy, numeracy, content knowledge, assessment, and pedagogy to people who have been and practiced teaching
4. Keep the TPD topics simple and specific. Go for depth instead of breadth, and make sure that teachers come away from the session with all the information they need to start using it in the classroom.
5. Deepen subject knowledge.
6. Make TPD interactive. Students learn with hands-on and interactive learning.
7. Effective Teacher professional development must be continual and ongoing (*Up to 50 hours of instruction, and practice*) to master and implement a new instructional strategy considering that brief, one-off workshops have little/no impact on teacher professional development.
8. Early career support in a teacher's life helps new teachers transition successfully from teacher training programmes to being in a classroom. Besides, continuous training of teachers helps experienced teachers adapt to changes in what they need to teach.

C: Modality

1. Treat teachers as professionals willing to develop an existing, unique, and powerful skillset. Do not treat teachers as students.
2. Evaluate the individual professional needs of teachers to enhance their skills.
3. Organize educators into learning teams based on their proximity to issues and assign each a topic with a goal.
4. Teacher Professional Development (TPD) should include a blend of synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (self-paced) and activities as a way of addressing individual teacher needs and changing contexts
5. As part of TPD provide teachers and teacher educators should be accessible to a central repository for high-quality TPD resources for their use.
6. Model what is being taught by using different senses (*Touch, hearing, feeling, seeing*). Teachers and students like other people learn differently. Some learn better by 'doing'

7. Emphasis on Teacher Professional Development should be directed towards more on-site support-based interventions rather than workshops.
8. Use micro-teaching practices in groups during training. This includes video recording of lessons, re-play, discussion, debriefing, and feedback to improve teaching and learning.
9. Support teacher's access to books to read, professional videos, attend conferences, and let teachers engage in self-study and learning as part of their continuous and progressive teacher professional development.

D: Collaboration

1. Teacher Professional Development should promote teacher collaboration through teacher-teacher support, classroom observations and feedback from other teachers. This collaboration increases teacher effectiveness.
2. Give chance to teachers who already have experience in blended learning techniques an opportunity to share her successes and challenges.
3. Start peer coaching activities with teachers observing their colleagues in the classroom on a regular basis. They'll have a chance to see how their peers handle classroom issues and approach their lessons. They can also collaborate and suggest areas of improvement.

E: Technology

1. During these times of COVID-19 and protracted crisis invest in remote and practical ways to continuously improve and support TPD through the use of technology.
2. Enhance Teacher Professional Development Through Technology. To achieve this train teachers on how to use technology and how to apply the skills. It is important to note that technology cannot replace in-person training. Technology is a tool to further support school communities remotely.
3. Enhance the use of technology such as radio, videos, mobile phones, tablets, TV, the internet, and open content to support the professional development of teachers.

F: Feedback

1. Create a feedback loop and mechanism among the teachers undergoing TPD. The feedback mechanism can be through social media, surveys, focus group discussions or face-to-face meetings and reflections.
2. Train teachers on how to use formative assessment and student feedback to develop new strategies and improve instruction. When a teacher realizes students are not learning that is when teachers should innovate more as part of their professional development.
3. Student feedback is key to changing teachers' instructional strategies. Utilize students' continuous assessment tests (CATs), and formative and summative assessment results as feedback on the effectiveness of teachers' delivery of content and level of professional development.
4. Teachers should be given effective and actionable feedback that helps them to improve.

G: Transformation and practice

1. It is important to realize that change in Teacher Professional Development is not instantaneous after training. It takes time and practice.

Sustainability of Teacher Professional Development

According to a key informant interviewed, the sustainability of TPD by the government poses some challenges. This is mainly due lack of adequate resources by the government to finance TPD in the long run. To enhance the sustainability of TPD in Afghanistan, there is need for UN agencies, development partners and other donors to commit long-term funding towards improving TPD in Afghanistan. However, when the teachers attend TPD programmes, they develop appropriate competencies that if practiced can benefit students' learning and performance. Similarly, the trained teachers can pass on the skills they learnt by mentoring, coaching, and supporting more teachers.

Licensing of teachers

The directorate of teacher professional development under MoE has developed a framework to guide the professional development of teachers and education staff at three levels – national, provincial, and district levels.

- a) Article 22: Establishment, implementation, support, and improvement of the licensing system of education staff and the persons qualified as teachers
- b) Article 25: Management of the licensing system of education staff
- c) Article 26: Issuance of license to education staff and teachers
- d) Article 46: Introduction of a licensing system for education staff

Recruitment of teachers and teacher educators in Afghanistan

Under the previous government, the Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) in collaboration with the relevant individual line Ministry had the mandate to competitively recruit civil servants, among them teacher educators.

The minimum education qualification of a teacher to teach grades 1-12 in the primary, lower, and high secondary school is grade 14. In some exceptional cases, the qualification could be less than grade 14.

The Community Based Education (CBE) policy of 2018 set the below criteria for teachers teaching Accelerated Learning Programmes (ALP)/ CBE classes as indicated below:

- a) Graduates with a bachelor's degree and/or grade-14 graduates, preferably from teacher training colleges
- b) Secondary school graduates with equivalent to grade 12.
- c) Teachers with education lower than grade 12, but at least grade 9 or equivalent.

d) Teachers who have less than a grade 12 education can be accepted as an *Ajeer* teacher based on ability, enthusiasm, and approval of the respective school Shura/committee.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

Approach to Teacher Professional Development (TPD)

The formal process of teacher education started in 1912 when the first teacher training institute (*Daral-Moallem*) was established in Kabul. Teacher professional development has been developing and improving gradually since then with some stagnation here and there due to various factors, among them, insecurity.

To build a cadre of qualified teachers, the Afghan government designed various programmes, among them, a national teacher education programme (TEP) in partnership with international organizations such as United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), World Bank, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Germany, France, and Aga Khan Foundation (MOE, 2007).

Examples of other national professional TPD initiatives implemented in Afghanistan has included:

- a) The Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP I-II) funded by the World Bank. EQUIP 1-II encompassed training of teachers in pedagogy and subject content and the
- b) In-service education training (INSET I-V) that also included organizing short term training for teachers at different levels in Afghanistan to different countries in the region such as India

In 2016 a Credentialing Framework for Teachers in Afghanistan was developed to ensure all teachers meet the standards of competence required of a teacher. Components of the credentialing system included:

- a) Supporting and ensuring that all teachers reach minimum qualifications within a fair and reasonable time
- b) Provision of incentives for teachers to continue professional development throughout their careers
- c) Official registration of teachers and monitoring teacher progress
- d) Consideration for pay and grade progression within the credentialing system based on continuous professional development and fulfilment of certain requirements including a formal assessment and evaluation of teachers' teaching performance, the development and assessment of a teacher professional growth plan (TPGP) and
- e) Passing of a National Teacher Examination.

Despite the above plans, this is yet to be implemented.

Models of Delivery of Teacher Professional Development

According to key informants, models of delivering TPD in Afghanistan has varied from use of ICT, short-term workshops, and research. Some of the platforms used in the delivery of TPD include zoom, WhatsApp, webinars, television, and Radio. Based on information from the key informants, TPD in Afghanistan is mainly run through workshops and seminars. Unfortunately, in some cases, the teacher educators identified to conduct TPD lack the prerequisite expertise in education to enable them deliver quality training. Other respondents indicated that TPD has taken the form of exposure visits and action research.

According to SCA, emphasis on Teacher Professional Development should be directed towards more on-site support-based interventions rather than workshops. SCA also recommends the use of micro teaching practices during training of teachers. Debriefing and feedback from teachers and teacher trainers play a key role in improving teaching and learning.

Some key informants also indicated that for effective TPD and improvement, it would be effective to establish a centre/hub with the required equipment and materials for internet-based learning and contact classes. In such a case, teachers undergoing TPD would gather at the centre and learn from digital content shared and also learn from each other. However, due to social-cultural inclinations, it would be difficult for women in Afghanistan to attend TPD in such centres. Other key informants intimated that while the use of TV and radio such as Marif Radio and TV would be an appropriate form of distance education, lack of necessary equipment, poor internet coverage, and lack of reliable power would be a hindrance to reaching more teachers.

During these times of COVID-19 and the protracted crisis in Afghanistan, SCA recommends the use of technology. To achieve this, SCA recommends the training of teachers on how to use technology first. However, it is important to note that technology cannot replace in-person training. It is only a tool to further support school communities remotely.

Action Research in Teacher Professional Development

While some studies relating to teacher education have been conducted in Afghanistan, there is little mention and practice of action research.

Action research is another area that teachers, teacher educators, and MoE staff are not familiar with. It is missing in teacher education, to me, it connects to teacher professional development and needs to be strengthened (Key informant, Afghanistan)

ICT in Education

Beliefs about ICT in education, infrastructure & access, capacity building of teachers in ICT-govt & non-state actors:

There is a rapid development of technology uptake in Afghanistan. Electronic communication and Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) are increasingly becoming important for education both as a subject for education and training and in the delivery of distance learning and individualized instruction. This has been necessitated by the negative impact of COVID-19 on education and limited access to education for different categories of children such as those from nomadic communities.

The Afghanistan government also realized the importance of ICT in education. The Afghanistan Draft ICT policy (2018-2022) highlights the importance of ICT in education and indicates that ICT competency is necessary for students in the 21st century. According to National Education Strategic Plan (NESP 2017 – 2021), the Ministry of Education had already signed an MoU with the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology (MoICT) for expanding the use of ICT in education and MoICT had funding commitment for implementation of the MoU. In the strategic plan, MoE had intentions to further promote and expand the development of electronic learning materials with support from MoICT. Key components and requirements in ICT in Education Strategy developed by the Ministry of Information, Communication, and Technology (MoICT)

Challenges in effective implementation of TPD

Based on KII conducted by SCA among education practitioners in Afghanistan, below are some of the problems/challenges faced by teacher educators and teachers in the country that impede the professional development of teachers.

- a) General corruption which affected and depleted resources including resources meant for teacher education.
- b) Previous poor leadership in the Teacher Education Directorate which did not place teacher education on the right path for development
- c) Disjointed planning and poor coordination and linkage within the different ministries and departments under the Ministry of Education. These included general education, teacher education, academic supervision department, and other departments.
- d) For example, while there were claims of thousands of teachers having been trained and their competencies developed over the years, there was little evidence to show for these claims
- e) While there was an academic supervision department in the MoE, most of the academic supervisors did not have the required mentorship capacity and competencies to effectively implement their duties.
- f) Lack of adequate financial resources to enable academic supervisors to conduct support and supervisory visits and support to schools regularly. There is limited follow-up of the trained teachers by the government to determine whether the trained teachers are practicing the knowledge, skills, and practices they acquired during the various training sessions.

- g) The quality of teacher professional development was low, mainly lecture base as opposed to being participatory and activity based.
- h) Unfortunately, the majority of teacher trainings are funded by donors. They are also short-term. Most donors focus on quantity rather than quality. Education supersedes quantity – good education is embedded in the quality it offers. As such most donors, not Sida, contribute to the lack of quality that exists in teacher education and the education system in Afghanistan.
- i) Most teachers’ educators are not familiar with the advanced teaching and facilitation techniques.
- j) Besides, most of the teachers do not have access to the internet and they do not have access and are also unable to use ICT. While some TTCs have computer laboratories, the computer laboratories lack adequate IT equipment and materials, power connectivity, and staff who can address teacher and student needs. Unfortunately, due to various reasons mentioned above, ICT-related learning has mostly been taught theoretically in schools and TTCs.

NGOs sides such as SCA, Aga Khan, Save the Children, and others, are doing a good job in providing in-service training of Community Based Education (CBE) teachers. Teacher training of CBE teachers is more effective and of high quality. (Key informant, Afghanistan)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATOR

Teacher educators are academic members of Teacher Training Colleges (TTC) under the ministry of education, they have the responsibility of teaching the students who used to be teachers in the schools.

Under the previous government, the Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education had the mandate to competitively recruit teacher educators for the TTCs.

The Teacher Education Directorate (recently changed to Professional Development Directorate) provides a “syllabus” document outlining the training objectives based on which the teacher educators prepare the resource material for training and delivering the training for in-service and pre-service students in the TTC.

Government financing of TPD remains minimal. To address this gap, bilateral, multilateral, and non-state actors have been directly financing the TPD they support in the target areas they work. An example of this is the financing of the Teacher Educators Master Programme (TEMP) which is funded by Sida through the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan. Since the beginning of the TEMP project implemented by SCA in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and two universities - Karlstad University, Sweden between 2011 – 2015 and the Tata Institute for Social Sciences (TISS) between 2018- 2020, a total of 102 (Women 30; Men 72) teacher educators have graduated with a Master

of Arts (MA) degree in teacher education. Another example, in 2014, the American University of Afghanistan started a teacher professional development programme (TPD) in Afghanistan to promote the academic and pedagogical skills of teacher educators (Teachers Education in the Global Era, 2020).

Despite support from non-state actors/NGOs the opportunities for professional development of teacher educators are very low.

The quality of teacher professional development was low, mainly lecture base as opposed to being participatory and activity based. To address this challenge, there is also needed to recruit more professional teacher educators with extensive teaching experience to support Teacher Professional Development in the country.

The interview respondent stated that attention for capacity development of the teacher educators is in the satisfactory level. In the classroom teaching, teacher educators are mainly lecture methods and very traditional and out of date materials with almost no practical work and experiments.

The TTC are lacking with the system of assessment and appraisal for teacher educators and identification of their needs for professional developments.

There are disjointed planning and poor coordination and linkage within the different departments under the Ministry of Education. These included general education, teacher education, academic supervision department, and other departments to properly plan the development of teacher's capacities as well as professional development of teacher educators and to established competent academic resources in the Teacher Training Colleges.

This is also confirmed by KII respondents that there is no connection between teacher educators or TTC with the school teachers/schools. This is the reason that teacher educators cannot align their teaching programmes based on needs in the schools.

In the recent restructuring in the ministry of education, the Teacher Education Directorate (TED) is renamed to Professional Development Directorate which will not be only limited to teacher education, other area of education will be considered.

SECTION III: PESTEL ANALYSIS – LANDSCAPE MAPPING – TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Factor/Area	Summary of what is working well	Summary of challenges and constraints
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The government of Afghanistan and implementation partners keen on supporting Teacher Professional Development in Afghanistan at various levels b) Previous government support the Afghan government elaborated a draft new competency based national curriculum framework in line with up-to-date international standards and Afghanistan community needs. c) One of the key components of the Draft Education Reform Strategic Plan (2021-2030) was <i>Teachers</i> d) The draft new competency based national curriculum framework defined a number of objectives for quality school education as well as compatible qualifications for school teachers e) MOE National Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 considered TPD as a particularly vital component and initiated different programmes to build the capacity of teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Protracted insecurity has negatively affected education (Teaching and Teacher Professional) to a considerable extent b) The previous government showed little ability to develop strategies and programmes that address the professional needs of various groups of teachers in different settings c) Although many teachers and newly qualified graduates are keen to do an excellent job and serve their country, unfortunately, teachers are often appointed based on influence, nepotism, and bribery rather than merit¹² d) Sanctions directed at the current de-facto-authorities following the take-over of the government on 15th August 2021

¹² <https://globalanticorruptionblog.com/2018/01/04/guest-post-tackling-corruption-in-afghanistans-education-sector/>

Factor/Area	Summary of what is working well	Summary of challenges and constraints
Economical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Willingness by donors and previous government to support education even with the de-facto authorities in power b) Government expenditure on education increased to reach 3.9% of GDP in 2019 c) Number of teachers increased by 47% between 2007-2021 d) There has been a steady expansion in the teaching force from 143,000 in 2007 to 234,022 in 2021 e) Percentage of women teachers increased from 27% in 2007 to 39% in 2021. f) Expansion and establishment of private and public Teacher Training Colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Education financing is highly dependent on aid b) External aid represents 49% of education expenditure c) Afghanistan total government expenditure on Education is 8% (2021) against an international benchmark of between 15-20%. d) Expenditure on Teacher Education and Teacher Professional Development (TPD) is much lower e) Corruption
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Throughout the history of the country, people have always shown interest in education. b) Successive institutions for teachers' professional development have expanded. These include Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) and universities. c) The countries demand for education has exponentially increased in the last two decades. d) There has been a spike in the number of men and women teachers in the last few decades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Women teachers face a lot of mobility, discrimination, social and cultural barriers b) Cultural restriction is the second biggest challenge after poverty that prevent teachers to access to education and professional development. c) In half the country's provinces, fewer than 20 percent of teachers are women – especially in rural areas

Factor/Area	Summary of what is working well	Summary of challenges and constraints
Technological	<p>a) The Ministry of Education is keen on expanding Education Technology (EdTech)</p> <p>b) During COVID-19, the Ministry of Education utilized a TV channel called (<i>Television Marif</i>) to provide training to teachers and students studying at home</p> <p>c) Many Teacher Training Colleges and universities are offering Teacher Education (TE) are well equipped with modern EdTech equipment and materials</p>	<p>a) Most of the EdTech initiatives are donor-funded thus not sustainable</p> <p>b) Access to reliable internet and power in Teacher Training Colleges, other education institutes, universities, and in most rural areas hinders the expansion of EdTech</p> <p>c) Majority of teachers and teacher educators lack pre-requisite skills</p> <p>d) Cost of EdTech remains high and out of reach for teachers, students, and persons with disabilities</p> <p>e) It is challenging to keep pace with technological changes and advances. This requires capital injection which is lacking</p>
Legal	<p>a) There is adequate legislation to guide education, teaching, and Teacher Professional Development (TPD)</p> <p>b) There are several national and international documents that Afghanistan that relates to the implementation of Education. Some of the relevant laws, policies, and guidelines that refer to Teachers and Teacher Professional Development include the Education Law of 2008.</p> <p>c) Afghanistan is a signatory to various conventions and protocols related to education. These include ascendance to the <i>Revised Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education</i> on 07 December 2020</p> <p>d) and subscription to the Convention against Discrimination in Education on 25 January 2010¹³</p>	<p>a) There is no one conclusive policy specifically addressing Teacher and Teacher Professional Development.</p> <p>b) Due to the <i>constant political changes in Afghanistan, lots of education</i> policies are not fully adhered to or fully implemented.</p> <p>c) There is limited political willingness, funding, and capacity to disseminate and create awareness on and existing laws.</p> <p>d) Education has been politicized over time thus affecting the overall delivery of education including education of girls in secondary schools and training of women teachers in and out of the country</p>

13 <https://en.unesco.org/countries/afghanistan/conventions>

Factor/Area	Summary of what is working well	Summary of challenges and constraints
Environmental	a) Afghan is a mountainous country with many rivers and a good supply of water	a) The mountainous nature of the country has affected the spread and location of schools, Teacher Training Colleges and Universities, and the posting of teachers. b) Teachers are unwilling to be posted and retained in areas with limited access and infrastructure development

Linkage between Landscape Mapping and the Project

MoE National Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021 considered Teacher Professional Development as a particularly vital component and initiated different programmes to build the capacity of the school’s teachers.

Despite considering the Teacher Professional Development in the National Education Strategic plan, still there is no one conclusive policy specifically addressing Teacher and Teacher Professional Development. And due to the constant political changes in Afghanistan, lots of the education policies developed are not fully adhered to or fully implemented.

The MoE in the previous government showed little ability to develop strategies and programmes that address the professional needs of various groups of teachers in different settings.

The sustainability of Teacher Professional Development by the MoE poses some challenges. This is mainly due to the lack of adequate resources by the government to finance Teacher Professional Development in the long run. Government financing of Teacher Professional Development remains minimal while it depends on donor funding which is not sustainable in long term.

Some national teacher’s professional development initiatives were implemented in Afghanistan with the support of MoE’s development partners and donors such as:

- a) The Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP) is funded by the World Bank. EQUIP encompassed training of teachers in pedagogy and subject content and the
- b) In-service education training (INSET) that also included organizing short-term training for teachers at different levels in Afghanistan.

The models of delivering Teacher Professional Development in Afghanistan have varied from the use of ICT, short-term workshops, and research. Some of the platforms used in the delivery of Teacher Professional Development include zoom, WhatsApp, webinars, television, and radio while on a

limited scale due to the unavailability of facilities and lack of knowledge in use the platforms for the teachers and teacher educators. Teacher Professional Development in Afghanistan is mainly run through workshops and seminars. Unfortunately, in some cases, the teacher educators identified to conduct Teacher Professional Development lack the prerequisite expertise in education to enable them to deliver quality training.

Action research is another area that teachers, teacher educators, and MoE staff are not familiar with. It is missing in teacher education.

Despite government/MoE commitment to Teacher Professional Development in the National Education Strategic Plan, while still adequate consideration has not been paid for Teacher Educators Professional Development.

The Multi-Modal Approach to Teacher Professional Development project's aim is to improve the capacity of teacher educators and teachers through different activities related to professional development. The project also aims to influence the policy, practice, and further research in distance teacher professional development through action research, mentoring, and professional learning communities.

The activities in the project will enable the teacher educators to use a variety of methods and approaches in distance teaching and learning, use action research in the field to solve the local contextual educational challenges and problems, create conducive teaching and learning in the school, use mentoring tools and principles for providing academic support to the teacher in order to assist them to improve their knowledge, skills, and practice.

This will cause improvement and change in the teacher's knowledge, behavior, skills, and practice, which improve the student's learning outcomes in the school.

The project also will help the MoE to identify the shortfalls and gaps in the field of teacher's professional development, plan for a sustainable programme, and to allocate enough funds for the activities. The project also encourages the development partners and donors of the MoE to provide adequate financial support and to commit to a long-term and sustainable programme related to teachers and teacher educator's professional development.

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SECTION V: APPENDIX (TABLES, CHARTS, GRAPHS ETC.)

Annex 1: Abridged Key Highlights and Timelines¹⁴ in Afghanistan's history – all with varying effects on Education.	
Year	Highlights Afghanistan:
1964	Adopted its first democratic constitution
1965 and 1969	Relatively democratic elections held
1973	Last king was overthrown in a military coup. Monarchy abolished The Republic of Afghanistan is established with ties to USSR
1975-1977	A new constitution is proposed that grants women rights and work to modernize the largely communist state.
1978	A communist coup takes place. New leaders take control of the government. They proclaim independence from Soviet influence and declare their policies to be based on Islamic principles. Disagreements ensue. Mujahadeen arises to battle the Soviet-backed government
1979	American Ambassador in Afghanistan is killed. A power struggle ensues in the Communist Party. The USSR invades Afghanistan on Dec. 24 to support the communist regime
1980	Mujahadeen rebels unite against the USSR-backed Afghanistan government and army
1987	New constitution reinstates a multi-party system
1989	US , Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Soviet Union sign peace accords in Geneva guaranteeing Afghan independence and the withdrawal of approximately 100,000 Soviet troops
1990	A constitutional amendment abolishes the monopoly of power. Emphasis is on the country's Islamic heritage.
1992	The Mujahadeen and other groups, enter Kabul. President is ousted from power. UN offers protection to immediate former president.
1993	A new constitution is adopted. Never implemented. Civil war continues
1995	The Taliban rises to power on promises of peace.
1995-1999	Severe drought. Over one million Afghans flee to neighbouring Pakistan
1996	New provisional constitution adopted
1996 -2001	Taliban rule. Sharia and the Hadith replace a formal constitution.
1997	Taliban changes its name to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Immediate former president is publicly executed
Nov 2001	The Northern Alliance enters Kabul. The retreating Taliban flee southward toward Kandahar.
Dec 2001	Taliban leaders surrender Zabul Province. The group's final Afghan territory. The Taliban regime is toppled
2002	Presidential elections held
2004	Constitution adopted in January states that Afghanistan is an Islamic Republic
2009	Presidential elections held
Dec. 2014	NATO officially ends its combat mission in Afghanistan. US-led troops remain to train and advise Afghanistan forces

Annex 1: Abridged Key Highlights and Timelines¹⁴ in Afghanistan’s history – all with varying effects on Education.

Year	Highlights Afghanistan:
2019	Presidential elections held
Feb 2019	U.S. and Taliban sign an agreement that would serve as the preliminary terms for the US. withdrawal from Afghanistan by May 2021
April 2021	Biden announces aim to complete US withdrawal by 9/11
July 2021	The US leaves Bagram Airfield
10 Aug 2021	White House says Taliban takeover is <i>not inevitable</i>
15 August 2021	The Afghanistan government collapses. The Taliban take overpower in Afghanistan. The Taliban announced the government as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA).

Annex 2: Key components and requirements in ICT in Education Strategy developed by the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology (MoICT)

- a) Expansion of ICT education and integration of ICT at primary school and an enabler for better learning and teaching processes,
- b) Expansion of ICT use for remote learning and education,
- c) Expansion of ICT as a tool for better scientific research and innovation,
- d) Expansion of ICT to improve education management
- e) ICT education will be considered as mandatory in all primary and secondary schools of the country.
- f) ICT education will be embedded within the school curricula
- g) Government Schools, Colleges and Universities will be provided adequate ICT infrastructure, computing resources and broadband internet to ensure the availability of ICT to teachers, students, and administrators and
- h) Requirement for private educational institutions to computerize and provide for ICT in their institutions as mandatory precondition registration and licensing.
- i) Encouragement of private primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions at the levels will be encouraged through the provision of fiscal and monetary incentives, to adopt ICTs, establish adequate ICT infrastructure and systems in their institutions.
- j) MoCIT will, in a phased manner, transform all primary and secondary schools into smart schools, where intensive use is made of ICT as an educational tool both by the students and teachers.
- k) MCIT will launch an intensive programme of education for teachers on the use of ICT in education. These educational courses for teachers will be provided in the local languages of choice of teachers to ensure the maximum level of required ICT knowledge is transferred.
- l) Promotion of electronic Learning (E-Learning) to eradicate illiteracy and provide universal education to all children and provide a platform for life-long learning and skill development among adults.
- m) Education management including its planning, monitoring, and control at the central and provincial levels would be undertaken using an ICT-based integrated national education management information system developed and introduced by MoCIT.
- n) Educational Institutions of Higher learning, both in the private and public domains, will offer degree courses at bachelor and master's levels in ICT-related subjects as a mandatory requirement. The institutions of higher learning will be encouraged to offer research-based ICT degrees at master's and doctorate levels.
- o) Educational Institutions of Higher Learning in the country would be encouraged to collaborate and cooperate with each other to share computing resources, establish a national online library, and undertake joint educational and research projects on ICT-related subjects.
- p) Institutions of Higher Learning and Research will be encouraged to establish campus-wide electronic learning and research environment and collaborate with each other and with other regional and international institutions of higher education and research to develop and deploy integrated and interoperable ICT infrastructure and systems to enable collaborative education and research.
- q) Establishment and strengthening of an Innovations and Research Centre Lab within Kabul University for use by professors and students.

Annex 3: Schools, Teachers and Students Statistics (2021)

Number of School (General Education)	Public School				Private School				Total Public & Private
	Type of School			Total	Type of School			Total	
	Boys	Girls	Mixed		Boys	Girls	Mixed		
Primary School	2,116	800	3,302	6,218	138	10	1,221	1,369	7,587
Middle School	1,284	580	1,958	3,822	67	7	455	529	4,351
High School	2,174	1,309	1,560	5,043	106	13	680	799	5,842
Grand Total	5,574	2,689	6,820	15,083	311	30	2,356	2,697	17,780

Students Enrollment (General Education)	Public School			Private School			Total Public & Private
	Type of School		Total	Type of School		Total	
	Boys	Girls		Boys	Girls		
Primary School	804,219	533,798	1,338,017	179,762	75,419	255,181	1,593,198
Middle School	1,090,774	666,972	1,757,746	115,031	50,754	165,785	1,923,531
High School	3,590,993	2,426,670	6,017,663	304,896	127,683	432,579	6,450,242
Grand Total	5,485,986	3,627,440	9,113,426	599,689	253,856	853,545	9,966,971

Schools Teachers (General Education)	Public School			Private School			Total Public & Private
	Type of School		Total	Type of School		Total	
	Men	Women		Men	Women		
Primary School	18,543	4,554	23,097	6,308	8,445	14,753	37,850
Middle School	27,388	9,239	36,627	3,779	4,528	8,307	44,934
High School	76,422	54,320	130,742	9,798	10,698	20,496	151,238
Grand Total	122,353	68,113	190,466	19,885	23,671	43,556	234,022

Annex 4: Teacher Training Colleges Statistics (2021)

Number of Teacher Training Institutes	Public Institutes				Private Institutes				Total Public & Private
	Type of Institute			Total	Type of Institute			Total	
	Men	Women	Mixed		Men	Women	Mixed		
Teacher Training Colleges	6	-	36	42	23	18	41	82	124
Teacher Development Centers	59	22	136	217	-	-	1	1	218
Grand Total	65	22	172	259	23	18	42	83	342

Number of Teacher Educators in Training Institutes	Public Institutes			Private Institutes			Total Public & Private
	Type of Institute		Total	Type of Institute		Total	
	Men	Women		Men	Women		
Teacher Training Colleges	1,323	300	1,623	234	127	361	1,984
Teacher Development Centers	1,311	46	1,357	7	12	19	1,376
Grand Total	2,634	346	2,980	241	139	380	3,360

Annex 5: List of public and private universities of Afghanistan have Education Faculty

No.	Province	Public Universities	Private Universities
1	Kabul	Kabul University	Maiwand Higher Education Institute
			Azhar Higher Education Institute
			Adrak Higher Education Institute
		Kabul Education University	Rahe Sadat Higher Education Institute
			Zanan Afghan (Mura) Higher education Institute
			Sayeed Jamalalden Afghan Higher Education Institute
2	Nangarhar	Nangarhar University	
3	Kandahar	Kandahar University	
4	Balkh	Balkh University	Mawlana Jalaludin Balkhi University
			Rahnaward University
5	Herat	Herat University	
6	Kpisa	Alberoni University	
7	Khost	Sheikh Zayed University (Khost)	
8	Baghlan	Baghlan University	Royan Higher Education Institute
			Qadas Higher Education Institute
9	Kundoz	Kundoz University	Kohandozh Higher Education Institute,
			Sheerzia Afghan Higher Education Institute
			Amam Muhamamad Shabyani Higher Education Institute
10	Bamyan	Bamyan University	
11	Faryab	Faryab University	
12	Parwan	Parwan University	
13	Badakhshan	Badakhshan University	
14	Takhar	Takhar University	Paiman Higher education Institute
			Rahe Sadat Higher education Institute Takhar branch
15	Jawzjan	Jawzjan University	Amir Ali Sheer Nawayee Higher Education Institute
			Matanat Higher Education Institute
16	Paktia	Paktia University	
17	Ghazni	Ghazni University	
18	Kunar	Sayed Jamaluddin Afghan University (Kunar)	
19	Laghman	Laghman University	
20	Samangan	Samangan Higher Education Institute	

No.	Province	Public Universities	Private Universities
21	Helmand	Helmand Higher Education Institute	Wadi Helmand Higher Education Institute
			Arakozya Higher Education Institute
			Bost Private University
22	Badghis	Badghis Higher Education Institute	Hanzalah Higher Education Institute
23	Panjshair	Panjshair Higher Education Institute	
24	Paktika	Paktika Higher Education Institute	
25	Urozgan	Urozgan Higher Education Institute	
26	Sar-e-Pul	Sar-e-pul Higher Education Institute	
27	Ghor	Ghor Higher Education Institute	
28	Farah	Farah Higher Education Institute	Abunasar Higher education Institute
29	Logar	Logar Higher Education Institute	
30	Maidan wardak	Maidan Wardak Higher Education Institute	
31	Daikundi	Daikundi Higher Education Institute	Sar Khasrow Higher education Institute
32	Nimruz	Nimruz Higher Education Institute	
33	Zabul	Mirwais Khan Nika Higher Education Institute (Zabul)	
34	Nuristan	Nooristan Higher Education Institute	

Annex 6: Stakeholder Interviews in Afghanistan		
No	Stakeholder	Number of respondents
1	Government Functionary	2
2	Non-Governmental Organization	3
3	Teacher Training College	1
4	Non-Profit Organizations/Teachers Elected Council	1

Annex 7: Interview Tool

Semi-structured interview schedule for Key Informant Interviews

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Landscape Mapping Study, which we are conducting as part of the project, “A Multi-Modal Approach to Teacher Professional Development to Address Evolving Educational Changes in Low Resource Settings.” The countries we are looking at are Afghanistan, Maldives & Nepal. The research study will be carried out collaboratively by Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA); Villa College, Maldives, and Centre for Excellence in Teacher Education (CETE), TISS Mumbai, India.

The MATPD Project will implement innovative approaches on Teacher Professional Development devised by CETE, TISS. Designed in and for under resources and developing contexts, they will be collaboratively adapted to suit national contexts of participating countries. It will entail the usage of diverse technologies and modalities for TPD that are context appropriate, combined with action research and social learning through Professional Learning Communities.

This interview is being conducted to understand the landscape of Teacher Professional Development in your country. As a teacher educator/policy maker that works on Teacher Education/Teacher Professional Development, we are interested in understanding your experiences and perspectives on this issue. We hope you can enrich our study by sharing your experience of the field, the changes that you are noticing (if any) and how you perceive it as affecting the teacher education sector.

Basic Information

- *Interviews conducted online will be recorded for ease of access to data collected.*
- *The interview will span for an hour.*
- *All names (organization & personnel) would be kept anonymous according to research protocols.*

Basic Details to be captured

Name:

Organisation:

Gender:

Age:

Designation:

Qualifications:

Years of experience:

- A. < 5 yrs
- B. Between 5-10 years
- C. Between 10-15 years
- D. More than 15 years

I. Status of Teacher Education

1. How do you think the teacher education space has changed over the last 5-10 years in your country? What is its current status (both pre-service & in-service)?
2. What are the key focus areas towards teachers' professional development? What are the areas that you believe need to be strengthened? (Probe: generic & specifically relating to distance education in teacher education, action research among teacher educators, ICT, and inclusive education)
3. What are the problems/challenges faced by (1) teacher educators & (2) teachers (Probe: generic & specifically relating to: connecting with teachers using ICT, WhatsApp, physically, in-service education being able to address challenges faced by teachers in the classroom)
4. Does your country have an education policy and teacher education policy?
5. Data on the number of government and private teacher training colleges in your country. (Probe: ask for relevant documents/website details)
6. Which agency is responsible for teacher education in your country? What is the structure like?
7. What is the process for recruiting teachers in your country?
8. How is TE financed in your country? Who are the key donors or financing entities involved in TE? How much of the total budget is allocated towards education (school and higher ed) and teacher training? (Probe: ask for relevant documents/website to source this information)
9. How are the teacher education institutes regulated? Are there any guidelines/standards for maintaining quality? Is there any monitoring mechanism in place for assessing quality?
10. How is teacher licensing managed and monitored?
11. Do you think non-state actors are important in the space of teacher's professional development? In your opinion, how has the role of non-state actors enhanced/improved teachers' professional development in your country? Could you share some examples?
12. How is sustainability defined in the country policy documents for teacher education interventions? What practices are in place to achieve sustainability? (Probe: How do you ensure that in-service teacher education interventions continue to function in future. What kind of systemic support is needed for the same?)
13. Are you aware of any large scale/national level teacher education interventions in your country? If yes, kindly elaborate.

II. Gender, Equity & Inclusion

1. Elaborate the kind of policy initiatives and interventions in place by the state and your organization to address gender, equity and inclusion related issues in the school and teacher education space? (Probe: pre-service & in-service TE programs)

III. Professional development of teacher educators

1. How do teacher educators plan for the in-service workshops?
2. What are the modes of professional development available to teacher educators? What are the most common modalities used in TPD? (Seminars, workshops, conferences, exchange programs, research, action research). Could you share some examples? Probe- How can research and in particular action research help in professional development of teacher educators?
3. How are the teacher educators assessed for their performance? What are the parameters on which feedback is provided to them & what is the mode? Could you share the observation tool/ rubric with us?

IV. In-service Teacher Education

1. How important is in-service teacher education and why? How does it affect (a) classroom instruction & practice (b) student learning outcomes?
2. Are the teacher education programs lecture based, experiential or a combination of both? How does it link theory with practice? Could you share some examples?
3. What are the themes/topics covered in the in-service teacher education programs (curriculum/ pedagogy/others: specifically ask about inclusive education, community building, action research, mentoring) How are the themes arrived at? Is it based on need analysis, any national /international framework, policy guidelines by the government?
4. Is mentoring part of the process of teacher professional development? if yes, what kind of mentoring do you provide to the teachers? What does the process look like-is it individual or group mentoring? What is the mode? What issues/ concerns & themes are discussed? Could you share some examples?
5. Does the national education policy in your country mandate the number of hours for Teachers Professional Development (TPD)?
6. What is the frequency and duration of in-service teacher education programs in an academic year? How many teachers do you train in an academic year? Are these programs centralized or decentralized?
7. Who conducts these in-service teacher education programs?
8. Is there a certification provided at the end of the training program?
9. How is the training program evaluated? Do you have any rubric for the same? Do you take feedback from the teachers and is the feedback incorporated into subsequent training? Could you share the observation tool/rubric with us?
10. Do the in-service teacher education programs entail a component of baseline and end line to gauge learnings of the teachers? If YES-what are the elements that you look at? Could you share the observation tool/rubric with us?
11. Are there any follow up sessions post the training? How do you address concerns and issues of teachers post the training program? How do you support teachers in integrating the ideas from professional development activities in their classroom teaching? Could you share some examples?

12. If follow up involves classroom observations- Do you conduct any classroom observations to study impact of the training program on students' learning outcomes? If YES- what are the parameters that you look at? Could you share the observation tool/rubric with us? if NO, what is the reason for not being able to conduct observations?
13. What is the relation between teachers' professional development and students' learning outcomes in your view?

V. Pre-service Teacher Education

1. How important is pre-service teacher education and why? How does it affect (a) classroom instruction & practice (b) student learning outcomes?
2. What are the broad themes covered in the pre-service teacher education program? (curriculum/ pedagogy/others: specifically ask about inclusive education, community building, action research, mentoring)
3. What are the most important courses that have a big impact on teachers teaching during the pre-service teacher education and why?

VI. Professional Development through Distance Education

1. What modes of distance education are suitable for teacher education in the country and why?
2. How can distance education be used in improving teacher education/ professional development activities? Are there any existing interventions that utilize distance education for teacher education? Could you share some examples?
3. Have you been engaged in using distance education for teacher education in the last two years? Elaborate on the role played and your experience. What worked for promoting teacher learning and what didn't?
4. Whether and What platform have you used / come across for PD of teachers?
 - a. Moodle
 - b. Google Classroom
 - c. EDx
 - d. Coursera
 - e. Marf
 - f. Others
 - g. Whether Media is used for PD of teachers? What? How?
 - h. (Pls give examples)
 - I. New Media: Social media (Fb, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Twitter, Clubhouse, WhatsApp, Telegram), Simulations (VR, AR, Bots etc.) , Open Educational Resources, Webinars
 - II. Traditional Media: print media - (newspaper, magazines etc.), TV, Radio, Probe- (if not explained)- what kinds of programmes are developed, what are the focus areas and are there any mechanisms for getting feedback from the teachers?

5. What is the status of ICT infrastructure & utilization in your country? (Probe- in teacher education institutes, among teacher educators, among teachers?)
6. Are there any interventions using ICT based activities for professional development of teachers? IF YES- please elaborate on the focus areas, nature of engagement of the teachers and how classroom-based teaching is influenced through these interventions? IF NO- elaborate on what kind of interventions would be useful?
7. What kind of digital literacy in-service education is provided to the teachers? What are the broad themes covered?
8. How can competencies in ICT among teachers and teacher educators be built and strengthened further?
9. What kind of challenges do the teachers face while using ICT in classrooms? How have these been addressed?

VII. Support for newly qualified teachers and their modes of career progression

1. What kind of support is provided to the newly qualified teachers? (Probe: Is it school-based support or any other form of support?)
2. Is there any structure/framework in place to help arrive at excellent & outstanding teachers? Could you share the framework/rubric with us?
3. What kind of incentives (monetary, non-monetary) are given to the teachers towards their career growth and progression?

VIII. Educational Leadership

1. What is the role and function of educational leadership?
2. What are the ways in which educational leadership can be developed among the teacher educators and teachers (in the role of mentors)? How does it /how can it contribute towards improving educational outcomes?

