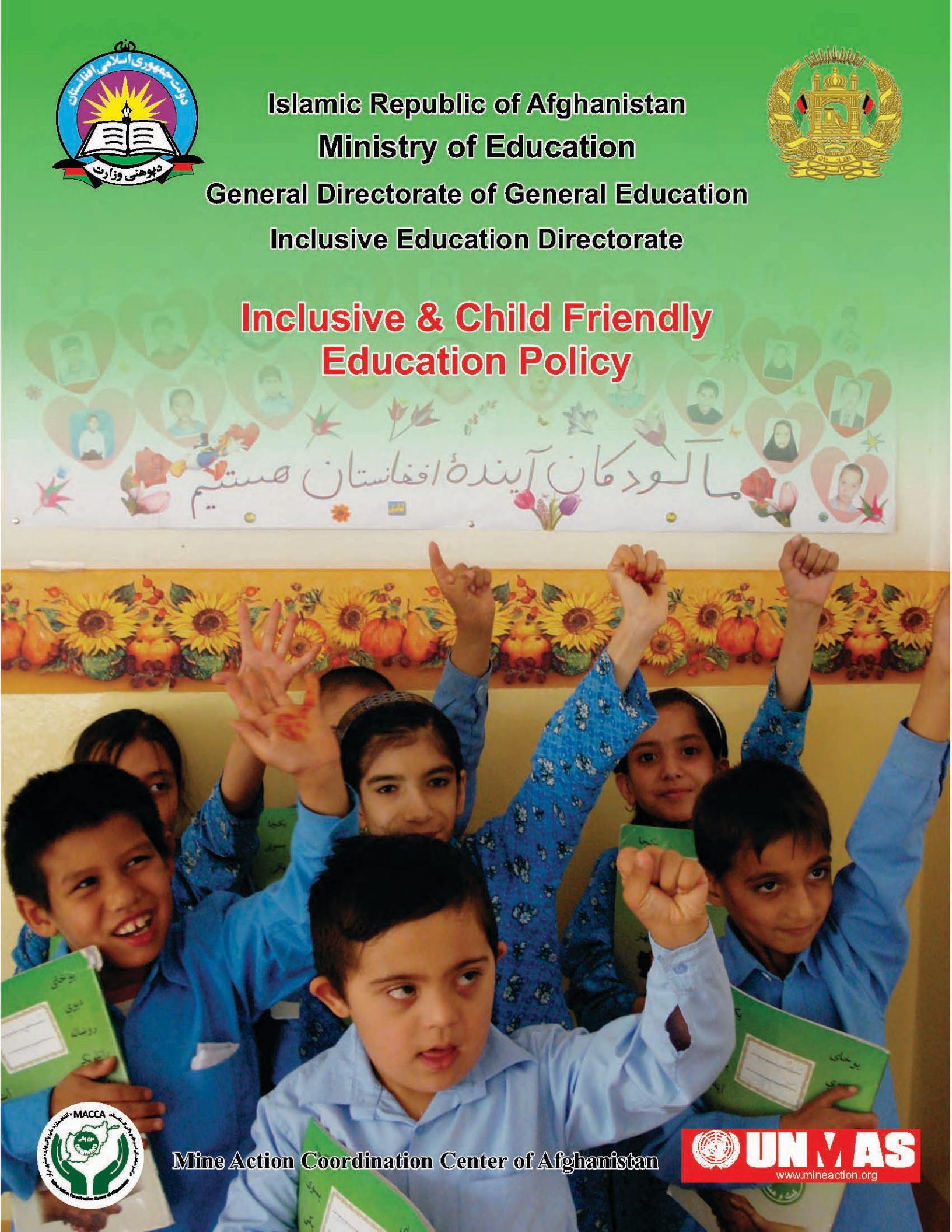
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Ministry of Education

General Directorate of General Education

Inclusive Education Directorate

Inclusive & Child Friendly Education Policy



Mine Action Coordination Center of Afghanistan

UNMAS
www.mineaction.org

Acknowledgment

Whereas Inclusive & Child Friendly Education is an approach to meet the learning needs of all pupils within educational systems, it aims at forming structures that are flexible and supportive enough to meet specific learning needs of children from diverse backgrounds in the classroom. Ministry of Education of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan would like to express its gratitude for the contribution of every government, national and international organizations as mentioned below for their professional contributions and expertise in developing Inclusive & Child Friendly Education Policy that will cater for education for all.

STESE2-JICA

UN-MACCA

SERVE Afghanistan

Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA)

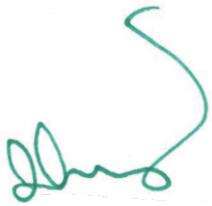
UNESCO

UNICEF

MoLSAMD

On this note, MoE would like to appreciate your hard efforts and looking forward to further cooperation in terms of enhancing Inclusive and Child Friendly Education opportunities for all.

Regards,



Farooq Wardak,

Minister of Education

September 2014

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List of I&CFE-CWG members + some IE abbreviations:

Acronym	Expanded Term
ANAD	Afghan National Association of the Deaf
ASL	Afghan Sign Language
CBR	Community-based rehabilitation
CP	Cerebral Palsy
CRDC	Community Rehabilitation Development Centre
CwID	Children with intellectual disabilities
DoMoE	Department of the Ministry of Education
DoMoLSAMD	Department of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
DPO	Disabled People's Organization
EMAD	SERVE's Enabling and Mobilizing Afghan Disabled project
ER	Eastern Region
FW	Field worker
GoA	Government of Afghanistan
HBT	Home-based training
HI	Hearing Impaired
HNI	Health Net International
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRP	Individual rehabilitation plan
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
NGO	Non-governmental organization
TTC	Teacher Training College
MACCA	Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Services
CCD	Community Center for Disabled
STESE2	Strengthening Teachers Education on Special Needs Education (Second Phase)
FWF	Family Welfare Focus
IE	Inclusive Education
SE	Special Education
I&CFE – CWG	Inclusive & Child Friendly Education – Coordination Working Group

Foreword

This Policy on Inclusive and Child Friendly Education in Afghanistan was developed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and in close collaboration with the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD), the Inclusive and Child Friendly Education Coordination Working Group (IECWG) and other key stakeholders. This document is an extension of the Needs Assessment that was done in 2009, and will help key government and non-government stakeholders adopt coordinated, systematic and effective steps towards Quality Education for All (QEFA) in Afghanistan. With it, the MoE recognizes that QEFA is impossible to reach unless all schools become inclusive and child-friendly.

As the concept and practice of Inclusive and Child Friendly Education has gained importance in recently years, Afghanistan as a member of the United Nations is committed to the International Committee agreements that by 2020 all Afghani children, who attain school age, shall have access to education. For this reason, MoE Afghanistan has in 2013 enrolled more than 10.5 million students in schools. This enrollment achievement has motivated the Ministry of Education to develop an Inclusive and Child Friendly Education in order to have all children well catered for.

The objectives of the policy are to develop inclusive and child friendly education process; to strengthen the capacity of education system; and to reach out all learners. The policy can thus be understood as a key strategy for achieving EFA. This policy focuses on expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood and friendly education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. It provides opportunity to those who are out of school or dropped out of school to bring them back. Promoting inclusive education means stimulating, encouraging positive attitudes and improving educational processes in the learning environments.

It's worth mentioning that the policy is not just limited to the inclusive education but also covers the entire programs of MoE and as well as does not bring changes in existing Educational Curriculum.

We appreciate MoE expertise, STESE2-JICA, MACCA, I&CFE – CWG members and other relevant Ministries and organization members who worked jointly to develop the policy.

I urge the Ministry of Education as well as other stakeholders to implement the policy carefully and successfully.

Introduction

The concept and practice of inclusive education have gained importance in recent years. Internationally, the term is increasingly understood more broadly as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity amongst all learners.[1] The government of Afghanistan defines Inclusive and Child Friendly Education as one that "ensures that all children have equal access to quality education regardless of their gender, age, abilities, disabilities/impairments, health conditions, circumstances, as well as socio-economic, religious, ethnic, and language backgrounds" (JSR, 2012: 10).

In spring 2008, the Afghanistan Inclusive and Child Friendly Coordination Working Group Committee was formed. In 2009 the working group agreed on a road map on Inclusive and Child Friendly Education (ICFE) for Afghanistan. It was agreed upon to develop a policy to provide framework for theory and practice for the Child Friendly Schools within the Ministry of Education in Afghanistan. Hence, the policy development process was initiated in 2013. The policy formulation was guided by the following legislations:

1. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989)
2. The World Declaration for Education for All (UN, 1990)
3. Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994)
4. Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000)
5. Millennium Development Goals (MDG's, UN, 2000)
6. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006)

Although Afghanistan ranks 175 out of 186 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI), remarkable gains have been made in education over the past ten years.[2] Having suffered from more than 30 years of conflicts, drought and massive population displacement, enrolment in general education reached 8.6 million students in 2012. However, there are 3.5 million children still out of school.[3]

It was estimated in the 2006 National Disability Survey in Afghanistan (NDSA) that 37.5% of all children from age 7 to 13 in Afghanistan are excluded from formal schooling.[4] It was further thought that only 32% of children with disabilities age 7 to 13 were enrolled in formal schools and that only 48% of girls were enrolled in schools.[5] These numbers include children with disabilities, as well as, the intake rate includes many of the over-aged children who are enrolled in primary school. This statement needs revision.

The exclusion of children from and within education must therefore be combated by the Government as well as by schools and communities. All schools in Afghanistan should therefore become inclusive and

[1] J. Kugelmass. 2004 What is a Culture of Inclusion? School of Education and Human Development Binghamton University, USA
[2] Human Development Index (HDI) Rankings, Retrieved 28 October 2013 from http://hdr.undp.org/hdr4press/press/outreach/figures/HDI_Trends_2013.pdf
[3] Strategic Planning Department Ministry of Education, 2013. National Education Strategic Plan (NESP3) Afghanistan.
[4] National Disability Survey in Afghanistan (NDSA) retrieved 28 October 2013 from http://www.unescap.org/stat/meet/widsm4/session4_NDSA_Handicap_Inst.pdf
[5] Ibid.

child-friendly. In inclusive schools, children would be able to learn according to their own abilities and to achieve optimal academic, social, emotional and physical development. This would enable more children to enroll in school and become educated citizens contributing to the well being of all of Afghans.

The vital role of education (from pre-primary to tertiary) in shaping the future of Afghanistan has been highlighted in major policy and strategy documents including: The Constitution, the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Education for All (EFA) Goals, the Education Law and the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP-3). The 2004 Constitution guarantees all children and youth equal right to access quality education. The right to education for all Afghans is also reiterated in the Education Law adopted in August 2008. It is worthy to state the duties of Inclusive education are not with interference to the other directorates of MoE. GED-MoE has made hard efforts to collect every stakeholder's comments in this policy, but due to time constraint and lack of partners' presence in CWG-I&CFE Meetings, we were unable to have them all. Whereas every policy can be changed following a period of time, your comments are highly appreciated to enrich this policy.

Section One

General Portion of I&CFE Policy

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of I&CFE policy is to make all schools in Afghanistan inclusive and child friendly and which respond to the learning needs of all children. This policy challenges exclusion and embraces diversity. Therefore, the exclusion of children from mainstream education must be combated by the government as well as by schools and communities. In inclusive schools, children would be able to learn according to their own abilities and to achieve optimal academic, social, emotional and physical development. The inclusive and child friendly education covers all 13 children categories under general educations after passing the primary education. This would enable more children to enroll in schools and to receive a quality education. The children who are most vulnerable to marginalization within the education system identified through an assessment survey conducted with financial and technical support by UNESCO in 2008 are:

1. Children Affected by Emergency
2. Children Affected by Drugs
3. Children from Poor Economic Backgrounds
4. Children with Disabilities
5. Children from Ethnic, Language, Social and Religious Minorities
6. Children in Conflict with Law and Incarceration
7. Nomadic (Kuchi) Children
8. Children Living Far Away from School -in villages where there is no School
9. Children living on the Street / Homeless Children
10. Girls
11. Working Children
12. Children Suffering from Neglect, Abandonment and/or Abuse[6]
13. Gifted Children (For more details please refer to Appendix, P40)

Rationale for Inclusive Education

To create an inclusive community, in which all persons are welcomed and are active participants, inclusive training must begin in all areas of society, including government schools. For too long individuals who have been excluded from education and the community have been discriminated against, treated unfairly, and have suffered socially, emotionally, physically and economically. The Centers for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE) Center on Human Policy give 10 reasons for why inclusion important:[7]

Human Rights

1. All children have a right to learn together.
2. Children should not be devalued or discriminated against by being excluded or sent away because of their disability.
3. Disabled adults, describing themselves as special school survivors, are demanding an end to segregation.
4. There are no legitimate reasons to separate children for their education. Children belong together with advantages and benefits for everyone. They do not need to be protected from each other.

[6] For further description on 12 marginalized group of, please refer to Need & Rights Assessment UNESCO, P18

[7] Center on Human Policy. Retrieved 13 November 2013 from https://www.google.com/search?output=search&sclient=psy-ab&q=justification+for+inclusive+education&btnK=#

Good Education

5. Research shows children do better, academically and socially in integrated settings.
6. There is no teaching or care in a segregated setting that cannot be provided in a general education setting.
7. Given commitment and support, inclusive education is a more efficient use of education resources.

Good Social Sense

8. Segregation teaches children to be fearful, ignorant and breeds prejudice.
   All children need an education that will help them develop relationships and prepare them for life in an inclusive community.
9. Only inclusion has the potential to reduce fear and to build friendships, respect and understanding.

Inclusive Curriculum

An inclusive curriculum addresses the child's cognitive, emotional, social and creative development. It is based on the four pillars of education for the twenty-first century – learning to know, to do, to be and to live together. It has an instrumental role to play in fostering tolerance and promoting human rights, and is a powerful tool for transcending cultural, religious, gender and other differences. An inclusive curriculum takes gender, cultural identity and language background into consideration. It involves breaking negative stereotypes not only in textbooks but also, and more importantly, in teacher's attitudes and expectations. Multilingual approaches in education, which are in line with the Constitution, in which language is recognized as an integral part of a student's cultural identity, can act as a source of inclusion. Currently 48 textbook titles are developed in third official languages (Uzebki, Nuristani, Pashai, Baluchi, Turkmeni, Sheghnani, Gojari, and Wakhani) for children of linguistic minorities in grades 1-6, and will be printed and distributed soon.[8] Several independent studies with indigenous populations have demonstrated that the use of children's home language has been successful in raising levels of literacy in the local language and the national language (Portuguese????), as well as raising achievement levels in a variety of academic subjects.[9]

An inclusive approach to curriculum policy has built-in flexibility and can be adjusted to different needs so that everyone benefits from a commonly accepted basic level of quality education. An inclusive approach to curriculum policy recognizes that while each learner has multiple needs – even more so in situations of vulnerability and disadvantage – everyone should benefit from a commonly accepted basic level of quality education. This underlines the need for a common core curriculum that is relevant for the learner while being taught according to flexible methods.

Accessible and flexible curricula, textbooks and learning materials can serve as the key to creating schools for all. Many curricula expect all pupils to learn the same things, at the same time and by the same means and methods. But pupils are different and have different abilities and needs. It is important, therefore, that the curriculum be flexible enough to provide possibilities for adjustment to individual needs and to stimulate teachers to seek solutions that can be matched with the needs, abilities and learning styles of each and every pupil. This is particularly important in the development and practice of learning activities for youth and adults.

The Afghan constitution has provision for promoting local languages. In an inclusive approach, non-native Dari or Pashto speakers receive their initial instruction for at least 3 years in their first language, while

[8] Strategic Planning Department Ministry of Education 2013, National Education Strategic Plan (NESP3) Afghanistan.
[9] Education The World Bank. 2005. Ed Notes, *In Their Own Language…Education For All.* Retrieved on 16 November 2013 from https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=EdNotes_Lang_of_Instruct.pdf&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8#

learning the official languages and gradually bridging towards those languages as the medium of instruction. Curricula should be available and continued to be developed in mother tongue languages during those first years of education.

Inclusive & Child Friendly Education Policy

1.0 Awareness Programs and Policy Making

1.1 The MoE will develop awareness material on inclusive education for children, parents, community and religious leaders, education and health officials, legislators, and other key stakeholders. This material can, in part be, developed by teachers and children in the pilot schools for inclusive education.

1.2 The MoE will promote girls education among religious leaders, community leaders and family elders in collaboration between all ministries concerned and the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education.

1.3 The MoE will provide training for selected teachers and head teachers in the concept of Inclusive and Child Friendly education.

1.4 The MoE will provide training for selected teachers in sign language and Braille script on the central and provincial level.

1.5 The Inclusive and Child-Friendly Education Department will train and maintain master trainers.

1.6 MoE writes monthly articles on inclusive and child-friendly education in the main national newspapers.

1.7 Work with the Government (MOE) Education TV Channel and promote inclusive and child-friendly education with monthly or weekly programs. Invite groups of children with disabilities to express their abilities and needs to promote better awareness and encourage action.

1.8 Relevant topics, which comply with the culture of Afghanistan, will be translated into Dari and Pashto and distributed to relevant departments.

2.0 Expanding the Reach of Education

2.1 MoE will promote Inclusive and Child-Friendly pre-schools (school-readiness Programs)

2.2 The MoE will construct school buildings that are accessible to children with disabilities and girls.

2.3 MoE, other relevant ministries and organization will develop more community classes in villages and hamlets throughout Afghanistan. MoE will strengthen existing community classes and ensure that they welcome all children regardless of their abilities and backgrounds, and ensure that provisions are made to meet the needs of children with special / individual education needs.

2.4 MoE, other relevant ministries and organizations, will establish new formal schools in communities and areas far from existing schools upgrade Community Based Schools to formal schools and establish new girls' schools in areas where girls' education is not possible in a mixed setting.

2.5 Multi-grade formal teaching (according to the Curriculum) will be introduced for children who are incarcerated.

2.6 An outreach program will be introduced for working children, starting with the 12 pilot schools for inclusive education in Kabul.

2.7 A holistic approach to Early Childhood Development (ECD) in existing education and health Programs will be promoted.

2.8 Children can enroll, in approved courses, in a center/school, do study when they have time at work or home and appear in the annual exam at school/center. Upon passing all required courses, students can be promoted to the next level.

2.9 Distance education will be made available to all students through the Internet.

3.0 Curricula, Examination and Assessment Systems

3.1 The MoE, other relevant ministries and organizations will develop a visual (video) Sign language dictionary and introduce this to inclusive schools as well as in teacher training/education college Programs.

3.2 The MoE, other relevant ministries and organizations will introduce an additional subject matter for children in 4th grade and above. This subject matter could be called "Local Content." What the children learn in this subject matter will be decided by the Province or District to make sure that education is made more relevant to the needs of children and local communities. "Local Content" could be; Agriculture; Cooking, Local Food traditions and Nutrition; Economics and Small Industry Development; Environmental Protection; Local Culture; Local History; Mountaineering; Poetry; Story Telling; etc.

3.3 The MoE, other relevant ministries and organizations will develop inclusive and child-friendly examination and assessment systems for primary and secondary education. This will reduce the vast number of children who are dropping out or being expelled from school every year.

3.4 Grade 1-3 will be developed in minority languages. Speakers from those language groups will be involved.

4.0 Teacher Education – Universities with Faculties of Education

4.1 The Curricula of the current Bachelor Degree program in Hearing Impairment and in Visual Impairment will be revised with technical support from the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education. Whereas, MoE is responsible to offer education up to baccalaureate level, Ministry of Higher Education is required to provide higher education services. Accordingly, I&CFE policy should be shared with MoHE to develop curriculum for higher education.

4.2 A list of Concepts and Terminologies for Disabilities and Inclusive Education and Child-Friendly Schools will be developed.

4.3 Embracing Diversity – Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments in the literature for all education Programs will be introduced.

4.4 Capacity among senior faculty members at the Kabul Education University will be built. The program will include series of guest lectures by visiting teachers and professors.

4.5 All teacher education Programs will include courses in inclusive education.

4.6 Universities with Faculties of Education will gradually introduce a Bachelor and/or Master's Degree.

4.7 Curricula for short diploma courses for Sign language interpreters and teachers will be developed. These courses will be established under the National Teacher Training Centre, Teacher Training College or alternatively under the Faculty of Special Education at the Kabul Education University in collaboration with the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education.

5.0 Teacher Training (on National and Provincial Level) as well as Teacher Training Organized by other Stakeholders

5.1 ILFE Tool Kit, on inclusive and Child-Friendly Education concept, will be made available for teacher training purposes.

5.2 Comprehensive capacity building among the faculty members of the Teacher Training Centers on inclusive education using the ILFE Toolkit as basis for the initial parts of the capacity building program will be done.

5.3 Coordination of all teacher-training Programs related to inclusive and child-friendly education organized by the member organizations of the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education (IECWG) – and pool resources among the members of the Working Group will be done.

5.4 All teacher-training Programs will include classes on inclusive education.

6.0 Support Systems for Children with Disabilities and Other Special/ Individual Needs

6.1 Establish (and develop) a National Competence Centre for Inclusion and Special Needs Education in Kabul under the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education (IECWG) and the Kabul Education University (Faculty for Special Education). Ideally, the Centre should have sections for; ADHD/ADD; Autism; Developmental/Intellectual Impairment; Hearing Impairment; Physical Impairment; Reading & Writing Difficulties; Social-Emotional Difficulties; Visual Impairment, as well as; Early Detection and Intervention. The main tasks of the National Centre will be to support the development of provincial centers and district units, offer technical support to the Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries, support teacher training and education Programs related to inclusion and special needs education, develop education and training materials, as well as coordinate the distribution of assistive devices to the provincial centers and district units.

6.2 Establish and develop provincial Educational Resource Centers for Inclusion and Special Needs Education in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan under the Ministry of Education and provincial governments. Ideally, each centre should have at least 3 to 4 resource persons (specialists) who are well versed with knowledge about disabilities. These persons will help support teachers in matters of disabilities, assessment and continued professional development.

6.3 Establish (and develop) Provincial Competence Centers for Inclusion and Special Needs Education in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan under the Ministry of Education and provincial governments, and in collaboration with the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education (IECWG), the Kabul Education University (Faculty for Special Education), as well as any university with education and health faculties based in the respective provinces. Ideally, each centre should have at least 3 to 4 resource persons (specialists) each for; ADHD/ADD; Autism; Developmental/ Intellectual Impairment; Hearing Impairment; Physical Impairment; Reading & Writing Difficulties; Social-Emotional Difficulties; Visual Impairment, as well as; Early Detection and Intervention. The main tasks for the Provincial Centre will be to support the district units, as well as teachers and children in schools. (NB: This looks like a repetition of 6.2 above. May be you need to define what you mean by “Competence Centres”.

6.4 Establish (and develop) District Support Units for Inclusive and Special Needs Education in all 445 districts of Afghanistan under the Ministry of Education as well as provincial and district governments, and in collaboration with the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education (IECWG). Ideally, each unit should have at least 2 resource persons (specialists) each for; ADHD/ADD; Autism; Developmental/Intellectual Impairment; Hearing Impairment; Physical Impairment; Reading & Writing Difficulties; Social-Emotional Difficulties; Visual Impairment, as well as; Early Detection and Intervention. The main tasks for the District Units will be to support teachers and children in schools, and distribute Braille books as well as assistive and mobility

devices. The district units will seek support from the provincial centers for more complex cases and for professional upgrading, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

7.0 Development of Low Cost Assistive Devices

7.1 Low cost and locally made assistive devices for children, youth and adults with disabilities will be developed. Cooperation with technical and/or engineering faculties at Afghan universities, as well as with community and user organizations (DPOs) will be done. It is suggested that ear-impression taking and development of ear-molds be established in the country. With this development, courses on audiology need to be introduced so that competency can be developed in taking audiograms and interpreting the content. This will help in determining what type of hearing aid a child may qualify for.

8.0 Language of Instruction

8.1 The National Braille Press will produce school books and other reading materials.

8.2 Teachers speaking minority languages will be trained in using students' mother tongue as the medium of instruction.

8.3 A comprehensive sign language dictionary, with at least 8000 signs will be developed. The complete Sign Language dictionary will also be developed into a more visual form (video) and distributed to users throughout Afghanistan.

8.4 A curriculum for a Bachelor Degree for Sign Language teachers and interpreters will be developed. This program will be established under the Faculty of Special Education at the Kabul Education University in collaboration with the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education.

8.5 The Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education will develop a policy on Sign Language in MoE television.

8.6 Curricula for a Master's Degree program for Sign Language teachers and interpreters will be developed. This program should be established under the Faculty of Special Education at the Kabul Education University in collaboration with the Coordination Working Group on Inclusive Education.

8.7 Sign Language resource teachers and interpreters will be developed, per year, through a separate bachelor degree program. (How many teachers??). The total need for sign language resource teachers and interpreters is estimated to more than 1,000. There should be at least 2 Sign language resource teachers based in each province in the Provincial Centers to provide itinerant support to the Sign language teachers who are based in District Units and schools, as well as those working with community based education (CBE) and rehabilitation (CBR) Programs throughout their province.

Quality in Inclusive and Child Friendly Education

The MoE recognize that Inclusive and Child-Friendly education will improve the quality of education for all students through increasing diversity in the classroom. With collaboration between stakeholders, each individual student has the potential to succeed academically. Each student has strengths and opportunities for improvement, and each student has unique contributions to offer other learners. Thus, the performance of mainstream students is not compromised by inclusive education, but enriched. These settings often provide additional learning opportunities, especially relating to social justice, prejudice, equity, etc. With support and experience, teachers are able to develop confidence in their abilities. The diversity from inclusive education settings enriches the learning experience and promotes social competence and communication skills for all.

Ways in which diversity enriches us all:

1. Each student has unique contributions to offer to other learners.
2. Each student has strengths and needs.
3. Effective learning results from the collaborative efforts of everyone working to ensure each student's success.
4. Social competence and communication skills improve when marginalized students are educated in inclusive settings
5. The presence of marginalized students provide a catalyst for learning opportunities and experiences that might not otherwise be part of the curriculum, especially relating to social justice, prejudice, equity, etc.
6. Non-marginalized students benefit from their involvement and relationships with students who have been marginalized.
7. The performance of students is not compromised by the presence of marginalized students in their classrooms
8. Teachers become more confident in their abilities with support and experience.

Section Two

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation of Inclusive and Child Friendly Education Policy

Monitoring and evaluation of Inclusive and Child Friendly Education Policy is discussed in details. It is suggested that this section be read and understood alongside the section on Coordination because the two are closely linked. It is essential to understand these concepts in the light of I&CFE policy so that they are not confused with other forms of programming and projects. This section is a tool to make sure that government education programs and specific projects within the education system are monitored and evaluated in order to feedback to the Ministry's decision making mechanisms. This policy focuses more on building the capacities first as explained in the Draft National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan[10] and in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework – Capacity Building Program for the Ministry of Education.[11] The policy emphasizes on the importance of attaining results based on the capacities that have been put in place.

The major premises of monitoring and evaluation are information and data. The two terms (monitoring and evaluation) are concerned with collection, analysis and use of information to support informed decision-making. In the Afghanistan context, the Ministry of Education decries lack of reliable information and data. Lack of reliable information and data are the biggest challenges that hinder proper decision-making, policy development and planning[12]. Monitoring activity provides the basic building blocks of decision-making, for strategic planning and resource mobilization (Osman I., 2002)[13]. Evaluation has to do with systematic assessment and completion of a program or project. Finally, since this policy is Government property, M&E format must be developed and continually updated. Results of evaluation need to be shared with a view to inform other programs within the education system, donor agencies and national policies. This will provide synergy in the daily business of government operation systems.

Monitoring:

Monitoring is the day-to-day management tasks of collecting and reviewing information that reveals how an operation is proceeding and what aspects of it, if any, need correcting[14]. Monitoring should be seen as a continuing function of the Ministry of Education. The function should be that of systematic collection of data on specified indicators whose purpose is to inform management and the main stakeholders of the extent of progress and achievement of results in the use of allocated funds.

Evaluation:

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed operation, program or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, as well as efficiency, effectiveness, impact of the overall goal and sustainability[15]. A good evaluation should provide credible and reliable information that is useful to the Ministry to enable it inform its strategic decisions. It must be noted that evaluation can occur at different points of program implementation if there is good reason to do so. As much as possible, evaluation reports should be shared with other implementing partners in order to create coherence and observance of the strategy upon which all education program activities of the Ministry are based. The data in the evaluation reports should also be reflected in the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS).

[10] National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (1389-1393/2010-2014 pg. 120 para.2 "Overall Strategies")
[11] Monitoring and Evaluation Framework – Capacity Building Program for the Ministry of Education 1st Draft July 2010 pg. 1 para.2 bullet 1-3 ("Output, Outcome and Impact levels")
[12] National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (1389-1393/2010-2014 pg. 123 para.1)
[13] Handbook for monitoring and evaluation International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 1st Edition
[14] Handbook for monitoring and evaluation International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 1st Edition pg. 14
[15] Handbook for monitoring and evaluation International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 1st Edition pg. 15

Objectives for Monitoring and Evaluation

To enhance provision of quality education through a well-integrated monitoring and evaluation system in order:

1. Accelerate the process of providing quality education through a good monitoring and evaluation system.
2. To build the capacity of Inclusive education Department in relation to monitoring and evaluation of all education programs in the country.
3. To establish well-coordinated mechanisms for data collection, analysis and interpretation at National levels
4. To make use of the collected, analyzed and interpreted data to inform the decisions of the Ministry of Education in all matters of educational service delivery
5. To share information and data with key stakeholders, partners and supporters with a view to create transparency, accountability and responsiveness to educational needs

Principles of Monitoring

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (1st Draft – July 2010) of the Ministry of Education mentions the following components:

1. Results Based Management Framework
2. Monitoring and Evaluation Tools
3. Management Arrangements

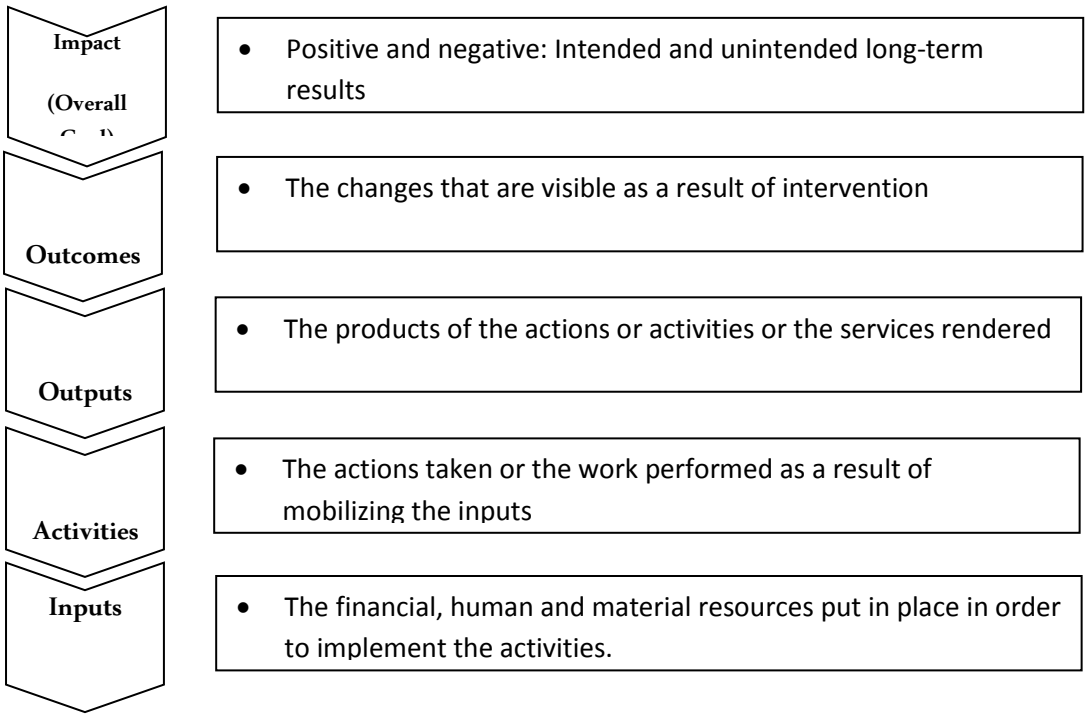
Taking each of the above at a time we have:

a) Results Based Management Framework

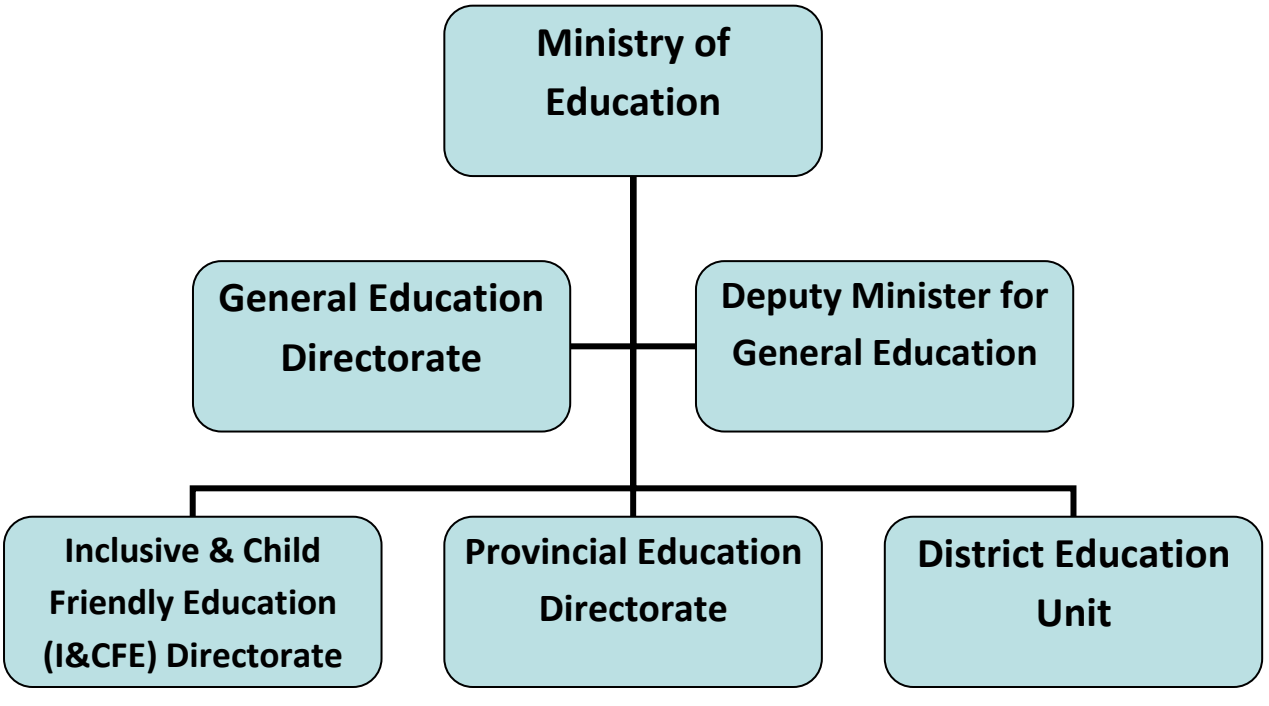
In this framework the most important issues to focus on would be

- To define realistic expected results
- To monitoring progress towards achievement of expected results
- To use the results for management decisions and
- To report on performance

More precisely, the Ministry carries out monitoring based on a logical sequence beginning with inputs, the activities, outputs, and finishing with the outcomes. Impact comes last. A diagrammatic representation of this sequence is shown below.



The Ministry will be accountable for all official information and educational data that has been collected from the field. The hierarchy of information and data flow shall be as follows:



Bottom-line requirements for monitoring activities:

a) **Minimum set of results indicators:** These must be both quantitative and qualitative and matching each of the set objectives.
b) **Capacity:** This has to be established way before monitoring exercise begins. If capacity is lacking monitoring may prove very challenging. The existing M&E staff needs to have their skills honed or sharpened in order to carry out the monitoring activities.
c) **Standard Plan:** This is required to provide guidelines on how the data is going to be collected and analyzed. Baseline data and on-going data need to be considered. It is paramount that the plan should show a variety of data collection techniques, how to review reports, how to write a field visit or how to conduct a field survey.
d) **Responsibilities:** It is important that monitoring and evaluation activities are designated to responsible persons. In this way, accountability and transparency are evidenced. Budget allocation should be well reflected in the Standard Plan so that none of the planned activities fails to be done.
e) **Reporting:** This gives the monitoring system strength in making timely decisions by the management depending on the findings. Intervention measures are taken in relation to the reports submitted.
f) **Reviews:** It is always prudent to have bi-annual or annual reviews attended by key stakeholders to assess performance of the implementation of the Programs as well as plan for way forward. It is from the reviews that the whole spectrum of the educational Programs is analyzed. From the review exercise, the donors are provided with consolidated information.

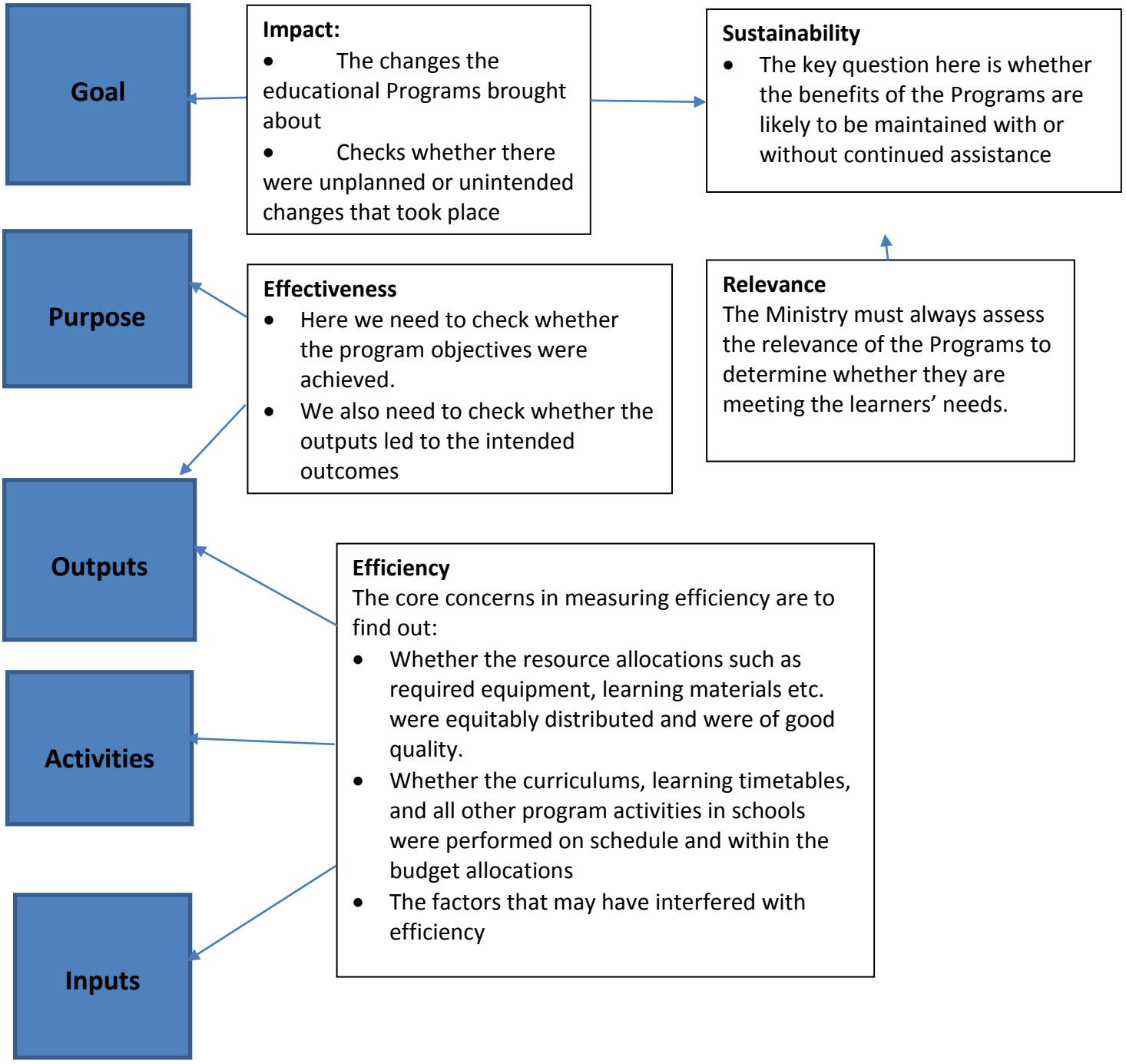
Principles of Evaluation

Evaluation has been defined as a systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed operation, program or policy, its design, implementation and results. The main objective of evaluation is to determine whether the program, the policy, the implementation process and results are relevant and are worth the efforts. In evaluation we look at the fulfillment of objectives. We also look at the efficiency, the effectiveness and the impact of the overall goal. Finally we look at the sustainability of all that we set out to do.
In summary, we are answering the following questions.

1. Are the policies working?
2. Were the objectives met? How were they met?
3. Were the log-frames well thought out?
4. How was the implementation process?
5. What made the policies, Programs or the projects successful?
6. What made them fail?
7. What improvements can we make?
8. Are the Programs in line with the national development plans?

Evaluation should be seen as an important management tool. It enables the management to review its performance, take decisions, learn from experience and account for its actions. Improvements on performance are actually based on the evaluations. Evaluation is also an accountability tool. It shows how the monitoring and evaluation budget has been used, how effective the Programs are and how efficiently they have been carried out. It is from evaluation that future plans are drawn.

The diagram below shows the areas of focus in relation to the log-frame:



Determining Capacity:

MoE determines its capacity for monitoring and evaluation by:

1. Defining an M&E Unit within its establishment. The Unit will have adequate trained staff that is responsible for data collection, data processing, and analysis plus reporting. The M&E Unit staff will build relevant skills in carrying out their tasks.
2. Defining the resources: These will include vehicles, computers (hardware and software) and recurrent costs.
3. Determining increased capacities: This will look at strengthening the Provincial and District capacities so that data collection and dissemination is smoothly done.

Section Three

Cost Effectiveness

Cost Effectiveness of Inclusive and Child Friendly Education

This section begins by posing some important questions. For instance: Is learning important? Does money make a difference in educational programs? How best can a country invest in its education system in order to respond to the social, political and economic growth? How equitably are educational budgets allocated and evenly distributed around the country? How best are the distributed resources accounted for?" To get answers to these questions, the government needs to reflect of what it believes in and the degree of commitment to the existing legal framework in the provision of education to the citizenry. The pillar of this belief and commitment for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is founded in the wisdom of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) who taught deep truths about learning. The Prophet in his wisdom advised as follows:

"Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave"; He also said ***"He dieth not who giveth life to learning";*** The Prophet encouraged us to ***"acquire knowledge. Knowledge enable its possessor to distinguish right and wrong; it lighted the way to Heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when we become friendless; it guideth us to happiness; it sustaineth us in misery; it is an ornament among friends; and an armour against enemies***[16]***.***

Research in the area of cost effectiveness of educational programs is not as wide as in other subjects. Researchers claim that little attention has been focused on the general issues of cost and productivity of education and how outcomes can be improved relative to the costs (Belfield C. and Leven H. M. 2013)[17]. Other researchers in this area Ernesto Schiefelbein and Laurence Wolff (2007)[18] assert that while education is increasingly considered the key to economic success --and investments in education by national governments as well as international agencies are growing--, current knowledge about cost-effectiveness in education is extraordinarily inadequate, especially considering the huge amounts of money that go into education.

Cost Effectiveness:

From a business perspective, cost effectiveness refers to the relationship between monetary inputs and the desired outcome, such as between the expenditure on an advertising campaign and increase in sales revenue[19]. Following this definition, it indicates that an educational program is cost effective if it produces good results without costing a lot of money. In order to determine whether a program is cost effective, some cost analysis has to be done. This kind of analysis is referred to as Cost Effectiveness Analysis (CEA).

Cost-effectiveness analysis is a form of economic analysis that compares the relative costs and outcomes of two or more courses of action. It requires that the outcomes of an intervention or program be evaluated in relation to the resources committed to it, Belfield C. and Leven H. M. (ibid). The main intention is to explicitly assist decision-makers in finding out which programs are effective and which ones are not. Effective program will warrant justification for more resource allocation. Any omission of cost considerations to educational interventions risks the justification for resource allocation. To this end it follows that the Ministry of Education will prioritize some educational interventions that will respond to the needs of marginalized children regardless of any causes and all those excluded from schooling without compromising on the quality. At the same time, the Ministry is well aware of the country's commitments to delivering educational services to all as embedded in the County's Education Law and the Governing Constitution.

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[16] Wisdom words of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) http://www.twf.org/Sayings/Sayings4.html#Learning

[17] Education and Innovation Theme Cost-Effectiveness in School Education January 2013 (Abstract); The United States Study Centre; Grattan Institute

[18] Cost-Effectiveness of Primary School Interventions in English Speaking East and West Africa: A Survey of Opinion by Education Planners and Economists (p. i. Executive Summary)

[19] http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/cost-effectiveness.html

Objectives of Cost Effectiveness

The Analysis of the Afghan Education Sector and Cost Benefit Analysis of the 2nd Education Quality Improvement – MoE April 29, 2013 Ref. N°: MoE/CS/EQUIP/CQS-21 – World Bank Project[20] - puts the objectives of cost benefits as follows:

Promoting equitable access to basic education: The document defines equitable access as the opportunity to enroll in and complete a formal education program, regardless of gender, geographic location, and minority status / ethnicity. Clearly, inclusive and child friendly education is embraced in this context.

Accessibility is the most important issue for people with disability. In an accessible place, a person with disability feels himself/herself confident, comfortable, motivated and able. Therefore, in public schools and universities, the following points have to be considered:

- **Ramp:** every public school and university (government and private ones) must have standard ramps for wheelchair users
- **Elevator:** If building of the schools and universities is more than one floor, they must have elevators
- **Doors:** width entrance door of a class must be wide enough for a wheelchair user
- **Toilet:** Every school and university must have accessible toilets for wheelchair user
- **Class adaptation (Special chair, desk or other device):** If a person with disability needs a special chair, desk or other necessity tools, it should be provided.

1. **Improving quality of education:**
    a. A safe & friendly learning environment;
    b. Teachers who are competent in subject matter and pedagogy conducive to learning;
    c. Adequate and relevant materials for teaching and learning; and
    d. Appropriate class sizes and student-teacher ratios.
2. **Strengthening service delivery:** Service delivery refers to the capacity of support systems at the MoE to provide equitable quality education across Afghanistan, in terms of finance, procurement, human resources, as well as in terms of information management and use of data in policy and planning. Investment in service delivery is a great National resource and should be utilized appropriately. For this reason, allocation of money should be made through regular budgets alongside donor budgets. Priority should be given to accessibility of disabled students to education not their size. The government notes that education is a basic right of all children and adults and a pre-condition for democratic process and social participation.[21] NESP continues to say that education is the foundation for the development of human resources required for economic development of the country and can contribute to poverty reduction and bring peace and unity. These statements of facts give the populace the ground to demand Education for All.

It will be noted that the above objectives discuss cost benefits as opposed to cost effectiveness although the two terms are closely related. In this policy the objectives of cost effectiveness shall be:

1. To assist the Ministry of Education policy makers set priorities among proposed sets of interventions in the provision of education programs.
2. To carry out cost effectiveness analysis, and cost estimates across different interventions
3. Monitor and evaluate the cost of education programs in relation to expected outcomes

[20] Analysis of the Afghan Education Sector and Cost Benefit Analysis of the 2nd Education Quality Improvement – MoE; April 29, 2013: Ref. No: MoE/CS/EQUIP/CQS-21: World Bank Project

[21] National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (1389-1393/2010-2014) pg.134

4. Determine the main ingredients of the inclusive and child friendly education within existing education frameworks and aim to improve service delivery to all children with special education needs
5. Find basis and/or justification for adequate government budget allocation to inclusive and child friendly education.

Cost Analysis

Since cost effectiveness seeks to understand potential intervention strategies, it is important for this policy to analyze them in a bid to formulate methods of cost analysis for each of the interventions. In addition, it would be vital to also look at existing facilities vis-a vis the government domestic revenue capacity as well as other possible sources of funding such as World Bank, International NGOs and UN Agencies. Cost analysis is ideally meant to provide comparable cost estimates across different interventions. Other than the government, there are varied education providers including but not limited to UN Agencies, INGOs, and Local or National NGOs. These providers need to be assessed in order to establish the extent to which their education programs reach out to children with special educational needs and those with disabilities. With this in place, the Ministry of Education policy and decision makers can be able to estimate the size of burden left upon its shoulders and make provisions accordingly.

Cost-Effective Intervention Strategies to Increase Learning

In this section we look at some of the various cost effective intervention strategies that can be used to increase learning in the Inclusive and Child Friendly Education Program.

1. **Assigning best teachers in the lower grades**

Assigning best teachers in the lower grades for instance in the Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) and Grades 1-3 will help form a firm educational base. This calls for well-planned teacher training, local materials development, encouraging use of indigenous knowledge and community participation in the education programs.

2. **Setting Official School Year Programs**

More often than not, a lot of time is lost during learning because of lack of consistency in following school terms. A proper schedule should be in place to ascertain that the required hours of learning for each child per day is strictly adhered to. Without such a schedule, lots of man hours are lost shuffling between when to attend school and when to go home. As such, performance is affected and so are the resources that were allocated to the schools. In a nutshell, official school year calendar must be respected in all schools.

3. **Putting in Place School Attendance Policies**

It is advisable to have all learners attend school regularly. Of course there are several militating factors against school attendance but as much as possible, policies should be in place to indicate how long a child has been in school. School attendance does not however indicate good performance on the part of the learner. Nonetheless, schools with good teachers, good resources and participatory involvements by the parents will have good impact in the end. On the other hand, poor attendance may be attributed to poor quality teaching or lack of enough resources.

4. **Having Equitable Teacher Allocation per School**

The notoriety of over-staffing in urban schools affects education programs in the rural areas. In many circumstances, rural based schools are without teachers leave alone qualified teachers. In effect, children from the rural areas perform dismally as compared to their counterparts in the urban schools. This disparity can be solved when teachers are trained and subsequently deployed equitably to all regions in the country. More female teachers are needed to take care of the girl child education.

5. **Avoiding Teacher Transfers**

Although this may not be found in the Afghan context (except in the urban schools perhaps), teacher transfers from one school to the next adversely affects learners. Learners in one school lose their teacher whereas the transferred teacher may feel demoralized if the transfer was not genuine. His/her performance in the next school may not be up to standard. Costs of transfers can be minimized if a teacher is left in one school for a period of not less than three years. Transfers can however be negotiated and effected on other grounds of insecurity, medical problems, and promotions or otherwise.

6. **Avoiding Switching School Heads in the Middle of the Year**

The practice of Head Teacher switching can be very detrimental to school performance. There are obvious costs to this practice. The school where the head teacher is transferred from stumbles in terms of finding new settlement whereas the school that is expecting him/her may be in doubt as to his management qualities and concern for the learners, teachers and parents.

7. **Establishing Functional Parents Teachers Associations**

Coordination between and amongst teachers and parents keeps the school healthy in terms of attending to the children's learning needs. This dimension of cost-effectiveness is key to making other systems in the school run most efficiently. Where parents have poor or no relationship with the school, the results are disastrous.

8. **Maintenance of School Discipline Prevents Chaotic Learning**

Good discipline promotes systematic learning, innovativeness on the part of teachers and learners and it attracts support from the parents and the community.

9. **Holding School Fares**

School fares are such things as school competitions in academics, sports, science and agriculture. School fares attract peoples' attention; they attract donor or individual business persons' funding; they cut down on some school costs and school feeding. They also contribute to healthy school environments.

10. **Teachers and Learners' Engagements in Entrepreneurial Activities**

In schools where teachers and learners come together to produce items for sale to the communities around them, the costs on some important school items are drastically reduced. At the same time, skills in production activities are sharpened.

Although a little more expensive, other intervention strategies that can be considered include:

- Supply of equipment such as computers, laboratory equipment etc.
- School feeding programs particularly for nomadic children or children from very poor families
- Extending school hours where security is not a problem
- Having a smaller number of learners per class
- Raising teachers' salaries and having them upgrade their skills through continuous professional development programs
- Setting in place better teacher trainee selection criteria
- Making textbooks available to each student
- Setting up small school libraries
- Having longer school year periods
- Media programs that are meant for slow learners
- Establishing inclusive child policies and laws that protect their educational rights

For the purpose of this policy, the Ministry of Education needs to determine the outcomes of each of the interventions it seeks to put in place, and then make the relevant reforms to improve those outcomes at a lower cost. To do this, the Ministry will set up a system for collecting data that will inform their intervention strategies. For instance, the Ministry can identify the current resources, the number of trained teachers, their countrywide distribution, the costs of paying them and the effectiveness of their engagements.

Usually, a country's overall performance is seen at the end of primary or secondary school years when all candidates sit for a national examination. Smaller measurements of performance can be done at school level but they must not be used against children with special educational needs. Different forms of assessments can be applied for learners with special educational needs or those with disabilities and other forms of vulnerability.

Ingredients of Educational Interventions

1. **Labor Service**

This is the main ingredient in the provision of educational programs. Labor service denotes teacher recruitment, teacher training, deployment in schools and continuous professional development. In regard to inclusive and child friendly education, it is important to think about better incentives for teachers given that they are providing specialized service for which they have been specially trained. They take a long time to train and their retention can be very wavy if not given the right considerations. In most countries, specially trained teachers earn a little extra than regular classroom teachers. Teacher training can be split into two so that we have pre-service training and in-service training. This will ensure continued supply of teachers in the field of inclusive and child friendly education.

2. **Facilities**

Many schools in the rural areas of Afghanistan are community based education centers. They are fragmented and with very little facilities in place. Nevertheless, these are challenges mentioned in the introductory part of this section and cannot be ignored. To make this policy a working document, there is need to allocate standard facilities for each school. These would entail classrooms, separate toilets for boys and girls, accessible environments and teaching and learning materials.

3. **Equipment**

For children with various learning difficulties as a result of disability, low cost equipment could be acquired. The equipment will however depend on the degree of disability, the cost, the number of students being served and the use. Production of materials such as Sign Language Dictionaries can be done once. It is a capital cost but the signs have to be comprehensively done. Equipment for Braille readers can be obtained from the National Braille Press whereas assistive devices for learners with physical disabilities will be produced in the physiotherapy departments according to established need.

4. **Supplies**

Supplies are an on-going activity for the government or other education service providers. The costing is done based on the number of children being served. Once again, the cost should not be seen as exorbitant because the disabilities or vulnerability of the child do not increase by the day except in exceptional circumstances.

5. **Other services**

These would include guidance and counseling, educational resource centers and resource room services, establishment of school libraries, early identification and early intervention services for placement purposes. These services can be done at school levels. Early identification and early intervention services can be done at the resource centers. Parents can be guided on how to cope with their disabled child through home based educational programs. International and National NGOs have to a great extent catered for these services but the government must be ready to take them on once the NGOs leave the country.

As a consequence, costing of educational programs is not a simple issue. It needs well developed mechanisms that will ensure consistency, quality and sustainability. These mechanisms can be done through development of policies such as this one. Any government education policy is developed under the banner of the National Education Strategic Plan as well as National Education Goals. This policy finds its

strength in the government documents as stated herein. The section has discussed the objectives for cost effectiveness analysis, reasons for cost analysis, and cost effective intervention strategies. The section concludes by discussing some of the ingredients for intervention strategies all deemed at helping the Ministry of Education policy and decision makers find ways and means of responding to the educational needs of all children.

Section Four

Capacity Development

Capacity Building

One of the main priorities of the MoE is to develop institutional capacity of education offices to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. The MoE shall evaluate the capacity development programs and improve the MoE's strategies for capacity development. The MoE will also improve and simplify administrative procedures and systems to increase its institutional capacity. [22]

Capacity development core components:

1: Assessments and developments
2: Approval and implementation
3: Inter + intra departmental & stakeholders coordination
4: Monitoring and Evaluation
5: Human skills development

Aforementioned five core components of capacity development are the integral part for the effective execution of the policy. Indeed, policy is developed and approved, a coordination and monitoring and evaluation mechanism exist to oversee and better drive Inclusive and child friendly education activities/agenda at national and sub national level.

Most importantly, Human skill development is one of the core components which need to be addressed rigorously and it is vital, so that skills of the personnel developed at country level. To develop the human capacity skills based on MoE mandate structured training, workshops, seminars, orientations, coaching, mentoring, educational visits and information sharing are therefore is necessary.

Public Awareness

Public awareness programs should be extended through:

- Families,
- Mass media,
- Parental councils within school levels,
- Local councils,
- Public health directorate of MoE,
- Mental health care directorate of Ministry of Public Health,
- theaters,
- I&CFE Directorate of MoE for school principles and instructors

[22] National Education Strategic Plan (2014-2020), p.15

Section Five

Coordination Mechanism

Coordination Mechanism

In this policy coordination refers to the formal links between and amongst special and inclusive education service providers. The links are formal because they are based on the Government's vision of "... providing equitable access to quality education for all..."[23] existing Education Law[24] and the Afghan Constitution[25]. Inclusive Education service providers are diverse in terms of the specific focus and mandates. For instance, the different Education Departments established in the Ministry of Education perform different tasks but all geared towards improving education services. Institutions of Higher Learning such as Universities, Teacher Training Colleges, Technical and Vocational Education and Training also have education services provisions. Non-Governmental Organizations have their specific education service provision mandates. All these service providers must be coordinated from a central point so that there is coherence, synergy and adherence to the rules and regulations of the country's laws, national education goal and the general social-economic development plans and policies. In this regard and in reference to this policy the Ministry of Education is the central body in charge of coordination of Inclusive Education services. It is the legally established formal link between and amongst all the inclusive education service providers and provides the required professional guidance to the relevant stakeholders without compromising the quality of education or the rights of children with disabilities.

Coordination Objectives

- **General Objective:** To enhance the development national education through appropriate coordination of services in the delivery of special and inclusive education to children with disabilities and survivors.

- **Specific Objectives:**
    1. To analyze duties and responsibilities of special and inclusive education services providers at National, Provincial, District and NGO levels for improved service delivery
    2. To involve Government line Ministries in the provision of special and inclusive education services through coordinated activities and advocacy
    3. To create avenues for action research in special and inclusive education in the country's institutions of higher learning
    4. To monitor and evaluate inclusive education policy in line with established government procedures for equitable allocation of financial and human resources

- **Various Dimensions of Coordination**

  Coordination of Inclusive Education Policy will require several dimensions ranging from curriculum development and curriculum differentiation, adaptations or modifications, teacher training, setting evaluation standards to intra and inter-government and NGOs. The Ministry of Education, being the main umbrella body in charge of the education system in the country shall therefore make sure that the different key players in the provision of inclusive education services are committed to their respective responsibilities in the enhancement of the inclusive education policy. To this end, this policy identifies the following stakeholders as core bodies in the coordination of the policy:

[23] National Education Strategic Plan for Afghanistan (1398 -1393/2010 – 2014) pg. 1
[24] Islamic Republic of Afghanistan – Education Law Decree #56 Dated 31/4/1387 Official Gazette: Serial# (955) Article Six
[25] The Constitution of Afghanistan (Ratified January 26 2004) Section Two, Article 43

a) **Ministry of Education**
   - Teacher Education Department
   - Curriculum Development Department
   - Inclusive Education Department

b) **Provincial Education Directorate** to be in charge of
   - District Education Directorate
   - Teacher Training Colleges and Teacher Training Institutions at Provincial and District levels
   - Schools Heads
   - Parents and
   - Learners

c) **Line Ministries**
   - Ministry of Labor Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
   - Ministry of Health

d) **University/Universities**
   - Faculty of Special Education – Kabul University
   - Research Institutions affiliated to Kabul University

e) **Other stakeholders**
   - UN bodies
   - Non-Governmental Organizations

f) **International Cooperation**
   - Through exchanging experiences and ideas on I&CFE
   - Strengthening Coordination Working Group (CWG)
   - Through IE centers of donor countries
   - Via MoE website

Duties and Responsibilities of the Various Hierarchies in the Coordination Mechanism

The intention of inclusive education service delivery is to respond to the learning needs of marginalized children. These needs are varied according to the degree of needs, availability of facilities, expertise and allocation of resources. This policy is cognizant of the fact that there are inadequacies in inclusive education service provision mainly due to factors such as the country's terrain, social economic factors, lack of teacher training, peoples' attitudes and understanding of inclusive education to mention but a few. However, these hurdles must be overcome in line with the country's efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA). Key duties and responsibilities of each stakeholder can be examined as follows:

a) **Ministry of Education** shall:
   - Be the hub of all special and inclusive education services provision
   - Be in charge of planning, soliciting and allocating sufficient inclusive education budget to the provinces, implementing the policy, monitoring and evaluation
   - Ensure that the principles of Inclusive Education are incorporated in all relevant education sector plans
   - Ensure that the special and inclusive education curricula are well drafted, adopted and delivered to all learners with special educational needs and children with disabilities

- Recruit and train teachers in special and inclusive education according to the established recruitment procedures
- Review from time to time teacher education courses and/or Programs in order to conform with the required standards and to make sure that the courses provide sufficient knowledge and skills that are required for the delivery of inclusive education
- Ensure that the special and inclusive education courses offered in Teacher Education Institutions are provided by qualified professionals
- Develop guidelines, assessment standards and materials (Braille and Sign Language books) in consultation with stakeholders for the purpose of maintaining educational quality
- Develop assessment tools for early identification and early intervention
- Coordinate special education service provision in all context of learning including those that are run by Non-Governmental Organizations
- Establish national data base system that shall be incorporated in the Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS) in the country
- Collaborate with other service providers in the provision of assistive devices and technologies for better delivery of quality education and support to children with disabilities
- Establish working partnership with relevant organizations for the purpose of meeting the required international standards as well as funding needs
- Organize capacity development programs on Special and Inclusive Education at different levels in order to increase competencies
- Develop comprehensive communication pathways for raising awareness amongst political, religious, community leaders and the public about special and inclusive education
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the inclusive education policy in accordance with existing monitoring and evaluation procedures
- Promote action research activities from the grass root level to higher education level
- Strengthen affirmative action to increase gross and net enrolment as well as retention of marginalized children in preparatory, primary, secondary and higher education plus all other learning institutions
- Initiate establishment of a National Council for persons with disabilities which will be in charge of advocacy on the provision of quality education for all
- Ensure that the Inclusive Education Directorate is well staffed with qualified professionals who will oversee the implementation of the inclusive education policy
- Establish together with Teacher Associations and Professional groups procedures for giving incentives to special and inclusive education teachers in order to avoid staff attrition
- Institute proactive problem solving mechanisms or processes that will diffuse emergent disputes between parents and educators

b) Provincial Education Directorates

- Plan, budget, organize, coordinate and provide staff to carry out implement inclusive education in all the provinces
- Provide guidance to the District Education Directorates for easy implementation of inclusive education at District level
- Ensure that inclusive education is offered at all levels of education including centers run by Non-Governmental Organizations
- Ensure equitable allocation of resources to all schools

- Ensure that support services such as itinerant services, resource centre service and resource rooms services are offered where children with special educational needs are learning
- Ensure that Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are in place for children with specific learning difficulties and exceptional children
- Consistently and systematically build the capacity of the teachers at Provincial and District levels through Teacher Education Training Institutes/Colleges
- Appoint knowledgeable officers to give guidance to teachers and school communities in relation to inclusive education
- Coordinate pre and in-service inclusive education teacher education programs
- Ensure that assessment tools are well used during placement or mainstreaming of children with disabilities
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of the policy without compromising on the quality
- Maintain and share with the Ministry of Education all data pertaining to children with disabilities, special education, pre-service and in-service teacher education programs and Technical and Vocational Education Institutions
- Help initiate Regional Councils who will assist in the advocacy programs and implementation of Inclusive Education Policy
- Encourage action research in the area of special and inclusive education
- Work closely and collaboratively with other NGOs, parents, School Heads, teachers and learners for the smooth delivery of inclusive education services.
- Arrange for exchange programs, national and international conferences on special and inclusive education so as to keep up the pace of inclusive education development around the world

c) Line Ministries

- Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD) – shall be part and parcel of the Working Group for Inclusive Education and Child Friendly Schools
- MOLSAMD shall also be responsible for the recruitment and training of marginalized persons in TVETS
- MOLSAMD shall be responsible for the development of friendly and adoptable policies that favor the employment of marginalized persons
- Ministry of Health: shall make sure that early identification of children with disabilities does not compromise on their health. The Ministry shall in effect provide needed guidance and information that will help teachers make correct assessment followed by correct placement of the child with a disability in regular school. Follow-up mechanisms and/or referrals shall be put in place.

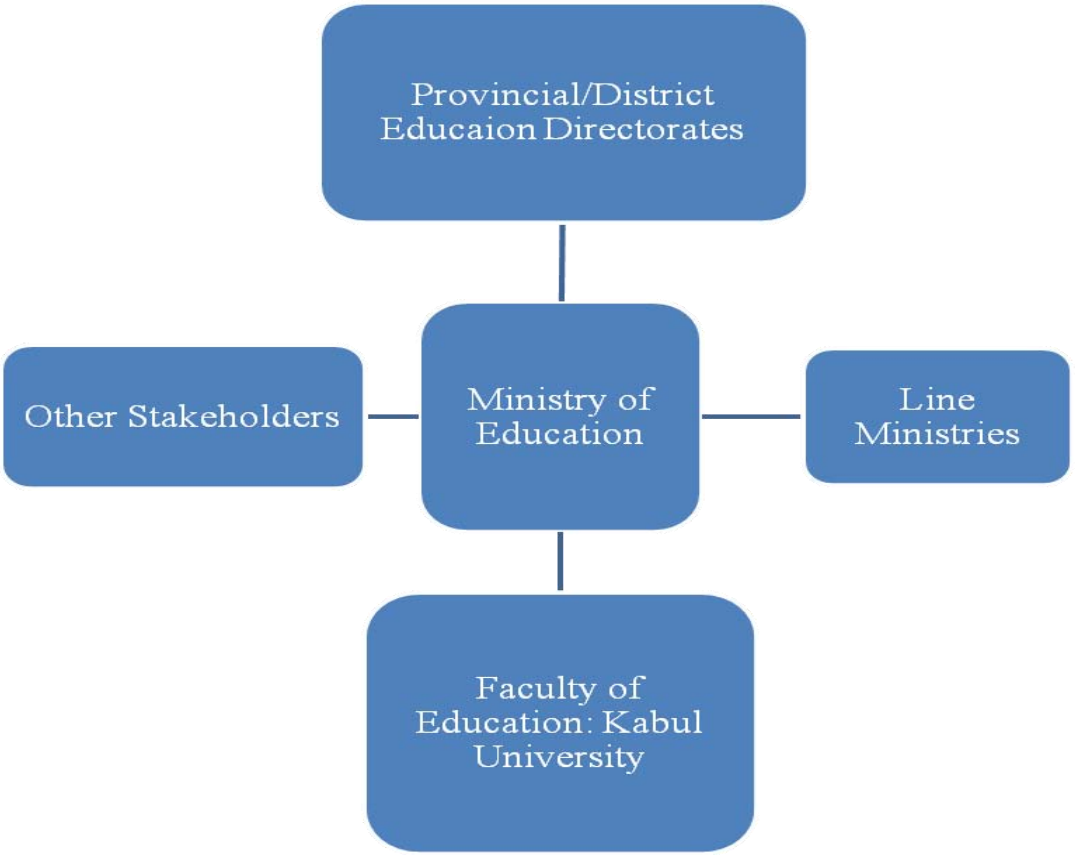
d) Faculty of Education; University of Kabul and Other Universities

- Develop inclusive education curricula that respond to the needs of trainee teachers and learners with special educational needs
- Provide continuous professional development (CPD) to already trained teachers for advancement of their careers
- Initiate school management and school administration training programs for Provincial and District School Directors for smooth running of the education system in the country.
- Initiate, carry out and encourage action research in order to inform practice
- Develop standard screening and assessment tools for educators to be used in all school settings but particularly for children with disabilities

- Liaise with other Universities outside of Afghanistan for sharing experiences and keeping up with new knowledge in the area of special and inclusive education

It is also important to mention that there are certain anticipated challenges during implementation because the country does not have sufficient manpower in special and inclusive education. Other challenges can be attributed to the nature of government funds allocation, insecurity in some areas of operations and infrastructure. These are areas that need focus.

Diagrammatic representation of the coordination mechanisms



Appendix

Gifted Children

Gifted and talented children as a 13th category of marginalized:

It is important that we don't forget about our gifted and talented children. They too are often marginalized. The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) defines gifted individuals as:

> Those who demonstrates outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as an exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10% or rarer) in one or more domains; Domains include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system (e.g., mathematics, music, language) and/or set of sensory motor skills (e.g., painting, dance, and sports).[26]

It is true that gifted learners can, "with the right kinds of teaching, master several years of grade level material in a single year."[27] It is also true that "Gifted children, when provided with the right kinds of intellectual stimulation and enrichment, mature into leading scientists, entrepreneurs and innovators."[28] However, without proper instruction, gifted children suffer intellectually. "Redundant "drilling" has been found to lead to less retention"[29] and gifted children "often have a tougher time in school specifically as a consequence of their intelligence or talent or unique way of seeing the world."[30]

It is important that research be done in Afghanistan to determine to what extent gifted and talented children in Afghanistan are marginalized.

[26] National Association For Gifted Children retrieved 27 February 2014 from http://www.nagc.org/index2.aspx?id=574
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Huffington Post. 2010. *Gifted and At-Risk*. Retrieved 27 February 2014 from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/seth-freeman/gifted-and-at-risk_b_600723.html

Resources/Related Policies / References For More Information

Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2000)
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf

ILFE Toolkit http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002142/214297e.pdf

Millennium Development Goals (MDG's, UN, 2000)
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview.html

Policy Guidelines on Inclusive Education http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001778/177849e.pdf

Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994
http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

The World Declaration for Education for All (UN, 1990)
http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-_agenda/education-for-all/the-efa-movement/jomtien-1990/

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) http://www.unicef.org/crc/

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006)
http://www.nda.ie/cntmgmtnew.nsf/0/9515327CFCF84669802574C70032B07F/$File/NDAUN-EUSeminar.pdf