Project Information Document/
Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 06-Nov-2018 | Report No: PIDISDSC24206
## BASIC INFORMATION

### A. Basic Project Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Project ID</th>
<th>Parent Project ID (if any)</th>
<th>Project Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>P161386</td>
<td></td>
<td>Assisting Governance and Access in Higher Education for Quality Enhancement (P161386)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Estimated Appraisal Date</th>
<th>Estimated Board Date</th>
<th>Practice Area (Lead)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH ASIA</td>
<td>Feb 08, 2019</td>
<td>Apr 30, 2019</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financing Instrument</th>
<th>Borrower(s)</th>
<th>Implementing Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investment Project Financing</td>
<td>Islamic Republic of Pakistan</td>
<td>Higher Education Commission</td>
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</table>

### Proposed Development Objective(s)

To develop excellent research and teaching in strategic sectors of the society and economy and improve teaching and learning for mid-level skills at participating affiliated colleges.

## PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US$, Millions)

### SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Project Cost</th>
<th>1,180.00</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Financing</td>
<td>1,180.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which IBRD/IDA</td>
<td>400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing Gap</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DETAILS

#### World Bank Group Financing

| International Development Association (IDA) | 400.00 |
| IDA Credit                                 | 400.00 |

#### Non-World Bank Group Financing

| Counterpart Funding                       | 780.00 |
B. Introduction and Context

Country Context
Pakistan is a lower middle income country with a gross per capita income of USD 1,510. Recent population census estimates put the population of Pakistan at about 209 million people, which according to Pakistan’s Vision 2025, is projected to grow to over 225 million by 2025 and will comprise mostly of youth (63% below the age of 30). Over the last 40 years, the country has experienced a major demographic transition, illustrated by high fertility rates from the 1960s to the mid-1980s, and a progressive decrease in fertility rates and dependency ratios thereafter. Pakistan has a window of opportunity to reap the “demographic dividends” from its expanding economically active population. Currently, 60% of the population lives in rural areas but there has been a shift towards urbanization. Pakistan is a federal parliamentary republic with Islamabad as its capital and four provinces and four territories.

Pakistan aspires to become one of the largest 25 economies of the world and achieve middle-income country statuses by 2025. Pakistan’s GDP for 2016 was USD 278 billion and currently, the GDP growth rate is 5.4% (highest in past nine years) and this upward growth trend is expected to continue reaching 5.8% in FY19. However, this growth trend is accompanied by some warning signs such as fall in exports and investment rates thus affecting the pace of fiscal reforms in the country. On the positive note, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a USD 54 billion infrastructure development initiative, presents a fantastic opportunity for the socio-economic development of Pakistan. According to Pakistan Development Update 2017, CPEC is not only providing for the much-needed infrastructure investment but will also stimulate the industry in the country. To harness these economic opportunities and achieve its goal of becoming a middle-income country, Pakistan needs will need a well-established tertiary education system that is at par with international standards and can produce innovative and skilled workforce to boost its economic growth. The government has recognized this need by putting the emphasis on developing its social and human capital in its Vision 2025. The first pillar of the Vision “putting people first” includes plans to increase investments to and develop the education system including the higher education system in the country.

Sectoral and Institutional Context
In Pakistan, tertiary education refers to post-secondary education and is comprised of two distinct subsectors:
Universities/degree awarding institutes and affiliated colleges (ACs). Each of the subsectors is governed by different regulations and faces challenges around governance and quality assurance. Both subsectors are comprised of public and private institutions with public institutions holding a slightly larger share of the sector and Higher Education Council (HEC) predicts that this will continue to be the case. Universities come under the jurisdiction of the federal HEC of Pakistan (HEC) whereas affiliated colleges (ACs) are under dual management. For administrative matters, they are under the control of their respective provincial higher education departments whereas for academic matters they are under the authority of their affiliating universities. ACs are funded by the provincial governments but their tertiary level degrees are awarded by the affiliating universities. ACs offer upper secondary grades (11 and 12) alongside tertiary level programs and serve as a transition between the two.

After decades of neglect, Pakistan’s tertiary education sector has seen a revival with the establishment of HEC in 2002 which was granted more funding and autonomy as compared to the previous institution. HEC introduced initiatives to improve quality and instill a culture of research. It closed low quality programs and controlled the mushrooming of substandard higher education institutions. Despite making considerable headway towards addressing the challenges facing the tertiary education system much remains to be accomplished, especially in the multi-layered governance of the sector.

The four major challenges in the way of meeting the priorities identified in the 11th Five Year Plan and the Higher Education Commission’s ambitious Vision 2025 development strategy are: (a) low and inequitable participation in tertiary education; (b) poor quality of teaching and research conditions (including inadequate and irrelevant research, and limited links between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the industrial and service sectors of the economy); (c) insufficient funding; and (d) below-par institutional governance and management, especially lack of the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS), which severely complicates long-term sectoral and institutional planning, monitoring, and accountability. These challenges are particularly exacerbated for affiliated colleges.

Relationship to CPF

The proposed program is in line with Pakistan Country Partnership Strategy (CPS). The CPS focuses on four strategic results areas: energy, private sector development, inclusion, and service delivery. Accordingly, the proposed program directly supports result area three and four within the CPS on Inclusion and Service Delivery. Supporting Affiliating Colleges is proposed to expand inclusion of students from remote areas and of women in quality tertiary education. Improved service delivery is aimed to be achieved through improved mechanisms of provision of tertiary education and management and governance of tertiary education.

The proposed program also indirectly supports CPS result area one and two, first by supporting select sectors for centers of excellence include energy, and secondly by providing support to private sector tertiary education providers and employable graduates.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

To develop excellent research and teaching in strategic sectors of the society and economy and improve teaching and learning for mid-level skills at participating affiliated colleges.

Key Results (From PCN)

1. Increased relevance of research
2. Strengthened Quality Enhancement Cells in the Affiliating Universities
3. Improved skillset of college graduates
4. Data driven governance of tertiary education

D. Concept Description

Component 1: Nurturing Excellence in Strategic Sectors
Tier I universities are supposed to be a driving force to develop research excellence in Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has invested substantial resources into upgrading their status and mission. However, even the best universities in Pakistan often lack the academic, institutional, staffing and financial autonomy that world-class universities enjoy, effectively hindering innovation and research. Moreover, research in nationally strategic fields is limited and underfinanced. The research management system is not able to identify and support excellent research and needs to be revised. For these reasons, research does not manage to solve most pressing societal challenges, there are few opportunities for innovation, even less for commercialization. These issues will be addressed with following interventions:

Activity A: University autonomy to unleash the drive for innovation
Increased academic, governance, staffing and financial autonomy will be given competitively to fifteen tier one universities in a phased manner to allow them to create innovative academic programs, cutting edge research, generate diverse sources of funding and to find the right faculty to carry out their goals.

Activity B: Stimulating excellence in research
Financing for innovative strategic research will be available through three distinct windows that each provide competitive financing.

- The Grand Challenge Fund (GCF) will tackle critical societal and economic challenges, be open to individual faculty staff of public and private universities to undertake research projects focused on specific themes aligned with national priorities.
- The Innovator Seed Fund (ISF) will be open to students and faculty of public and private universities who are ready to bring a product or service to the market.
- The Technology Development Fund (TDF) will be open to public university departments and faculties presenting research projects to be completed in partnership with private companies and in specific fields of national interest.

Component 2: Supporting Affiliated Colleges to provide Mid-Level Skills
Affiliated Colleges (AC) are potentially the main providers of mid-level skills needed to support Pakistan’s economy. However, the affiliated colleges system has not proved to be a productive system of skills development due to several factors including: loose affiliating mechanisms, lack of dedicated leadership, outdated curricula, low level of teachers’ qualification, poor facilities, weak interactions with the economic and social environment, and absence of proper monitoring. This component will address the quality of mid-level skilled labor provided by the ACs through the Affiliating Universities (AU) affiliating and governance mechanisms.

Activity A. Strengthening the Affiliation Mechanisms
- The project will help establish an enabling institutional architecture to support the ACs.
- The affiliation function in universities will be revised to help them become more pro-active in promoting quality in their ACs.

Activity B: Aligning curricula to the labor market
The introduction of the 2-year Associated Degree and 4-year BS Degree programs implies a two-pronged revision of the current programs. As a first step, the curriculum will be revised. Outdated curricula will be revisited and made at par with current knowledge appropriate for associate degree and BS programs. As a secondary step, degree programs will be made consistent with the semester and credit structures, and assessments methods will be aligned with these new structures.

**Activity C: Faculty Training**
In line with the new curriculum, AU faculty will provide training to college faculty on content knowledge. Trainings will also be organized on pedagogic practices. Finally, trainings on basic management skills will be provided to the principals of ACs.

**Activity D: Interacting with the Socio-economic Environment**
Employers and civil society will be represented in the Quality Enhancement Cells of AUs as well as in the committees that will be tasked with curriculum revision. The members of the committees will also be involved in provision of special training sessions to share their professional experiences. Finally, employers will be involved in designing new internship programs for college students.

**Activity E: Improving Monitoring and Evaluation**
- Quality Enhancement Cells of the AUs will carry out systematic support visits to colleges on quality assessment, training, and coaching.
- At the national level, the monitoring and evaluation of quality of teaching and learning will be strengthened through new studies on ACs and tier II universities.
- The new HEC Directorate for Affiliated Colleges will undertake strategic planning in the context of the entire sector, with special attention to the status of 4-year BS as a terminal degree and to the rapidly changing skills requirements.

**Component 3: Equipping students and higher education institutions with modern technology**
Component 3 will focus on provision of technology and complementary tools to help the universities and the affiliated colleges improve the quality of existing programs, while also reaching out to new groups of students. The program will also support the capacity building at HEC, Universities overall and ACs to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate innovative modes of delivering teaching and learning. In addition, this component aims to digitize HEC’s operations and data gathering and analysis from the higher education institutions.

**Activity A: Update the existing strategy and policies on technology**
The strategy will answer the following questions:
- How the service offer through Pakistan Education and Research Network (PERN) can be broadened?
- How can the financing model for PERN and other Information CT services be made sustainable?
- How can the policy and guidelines (including open and distance learning, accreditation, enrolment, faculty sharing, assessment, monitoring and evaluation) be updated to make them both restrictive for minimal practices, while not hindering innovation in the universities and colleges that are willing to experiment?

**Activity B: Connecting affiliated colleges and enabling technology enhanced learning**
- HEC intends to modernize ACs by connecting them with the expanded 3rd generation of PERN and its allied services along with provisioning of latest equipment internet connectivity, Eduroam, smart Wi-Fi.
HEC will offer training to relevant staff in universities and affiliated colleges on the maintenance of networks, as well as on the use of the software and hardware in the classroom.

**Activity C: Expanding the service offer of HEC and PERN**

HEC will continuously develop the service offer that is provided to institutions connected to PERN. There are a number of potential activities, including the development of an online market-place for relevant software by negotiating better prices from vendors (e.g. LMS software, research software, anti-plagiarism software, etc.), webservices, provision of cloud storage, cluster computing, etc. The goal of this activity will be to further professionalize the offer, while also building a revenue model to make PERN more sustainable on the medium term.

**Activity D: Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS)**

- HEC has a vision to improve planning, management and decision making by moving towards an Information Technology based e-governance system. This system is expected to include a comprehensive database of students, teachers and HEIs regularly populated and maintained in a way to help HEC and universities to make informed decisions.
- The HEMIS system will be a first step towards digitizing the higher education institutions to work with the content, financial and HR management systems envisaged by HEC. The project will also train staff in various units, specifically in Quality Enhancement Cells to feed and access their data into the HEMIS system.

**Component 4: Technical Assistance**

Public tertiary education institutions are ineffectively managed, and their internal governance continues to be inefficient, administrative staff are not fully qualified to handle academic management in a growing and modernizing education system. Colleges are also affected by serious governance issues that are not being effectively addressed by provincial governments. To add to the complexity, both universities and colleges are in the process to update the annual degree system to semester-based programs. The faculty is not provided any pedagogical training and is not used to the new semester-based system.

**Activity A: National Academy for Higher Education (NAHE)**

The project will provide TA to support HEC in developing training programs and delivery of these programs. It will also support AUs to conduct trainings for the ACs.

Technical assistance from the project with support certification of NAHE programs under international standards and support development of institutional framework to contribute to career management of academic and management staff.

**Activity B: Improving the research management system**

The project will support capacity development of the research evaluation panels to ensure quality of the various proposals received under Component 1 for the research and seed grants. In addition, it will support mechanisms of partnering with lead researchers and practitioners to strengthen the communities of practices and learning in various sectors. HEC will also provide training to faculty on research proposal writing and competing for grant requests.

**Activity C: Diversifying funding streams of universities and HEC**

The project will support capacity development for universities and the HEC in this area, as well as analytical work on the diversification of funding and endowment building strategies.
SAFEGUARDS

A. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project will be implemented in Pakistan at the federal and provincial levels. The project will involve universities located in the main urban settlements of the country. Other salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis will be defined during the project implementation phase and particularly for the funding schemes under Component 1.

B. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) will be the implementing agency for the Project, and it will be the main agency responsible for carrying out the environmental assessment process. HEC has gained substantial experience with environmental and social World Bank safeguard policies during the implementation of the Tertiary Education Support Project (P118779), closed in 2017. For example, HEC could constitute environmental monitoring committees at 50 universities which were trained on safeguards compliance. Under this new project, the environmental assessment-related capacity will be strengthened through hiring of an environmental specialist and social specialist who will supervise that environmental and social issues are properly addressed along the grants approval process and research activities. Specific implementation arrangements for environmental and social management will be defined during the preparation, including the roles, responsibilities and flow of work between HEC and the participating academic/research entities.

C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Marcelo Hector Acerbi, Environmental Specialist
Babar Naseem Khan, Social Specialist

D. Policies that might apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safeguard Policies</th>
<th>Triggered?</th>
<th>Explanation (Optional)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>This Project is classified as Category B, given that the proposed activities are not likely to result in significant negative impacts on human populations and/or environmentally important areas. While no direct, physical, environmental impacts are anticipated to result from the proposed project, some of the grant and research financing to be supported by the Grand Challenge Fund, the Innovator Seed Fund, and the Technology Development Fund (Component 1) may have some environmental and social impacts, both positive and negative. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be prepared to provide the project with the adequate tools and</td>
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mechanisms to ensure that the call of proposals, the evaluation of proposals and their implementation responds to best environmental and social practice, in line with the policy requirements. The ESF will include specific topics as Occupational and health Safety, management of biosafety and the adoption of specific environmental protocols (laboratories, specific research topics, etc.). A social assessment will also be carried out, feeding into the ESMF. This assessment will primarily focus on social issues related to inclusion, gender and equity with regards to all components of the Project. Moreover, relevance and adequacy of selected research sectors and tier 1 universities with respect to project objectives and social benefits will also be assessed. The ESMF will also articulate the mechanism to implement environmental and social management between HEC and the participating entities in the grant funding schemes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>This policy is not triggered as this is not a private sector led economic development project.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>This policy could not be triggered since the proposed activities will not involve natural habitats. The ESMF will include the procedure to screen out natural habitats. If during the project preparation the natural resources sector (forests, water resources, etc.) involve this type of habitats the policy will be triggered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests OP/BP 4.36</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>This policy could not be triggered given that the Project activities are to be carried out without any involvement on forest activities. The ESMF will include the procedure to screen out forests. If during the project preparation the forest sector is involved as one of the strategic research sectors, this policy will be triggered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pest Management OP 4.09</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>This policy could not be triggered since the project activities will not involve the purchase or use of significant quantities of pesticides. However, if during the project preparation the agriculture sector is involved as one of the strategic research sectors, this policy will be triggered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>This policy is not triggered given that the proposed activities are to be carried out without affecting physical cultural or archaeological resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>This policy is not triggered since none of the planned activities will have an impact on indigenous people of Kailash. However, if during the project preparation any</td>
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identified strategic research sector is perceived to have an impact on indigenous Kailash, the policy will be triggered.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>This policy is not triggered as no land acquisition, resettlement, physical or economic displacement is planned as part of the Project activities. However, if land acquisition and resettlement procedures and impacts become a research activity during project preparation, the policy will be triggered.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This policy is not triggered given that the project will not support the construction or rehabilitation of dams nor will support other investments which rely on the services of existing dams.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>This policy is not triggered because the project will not affect international waterways as defined under the policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>This policy is not triggered because the proposed project will not affect disputed areas as defined under the policy.</td>
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**E. Safeguard Preparation Plan**

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Dec 14, 2018

Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

ESMF to be disclosed by December 12, 2018.

**CONTACT POINT**

**World Bank**

Tazeen Fasih, Francisco Marmolejo, Karthika Radhakrishnan
Lead Economist

**Borrower/Client/Recipient**

Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Implementing Agencies

Higher Education Commission
Mahmoodul Hassan Butt
Advisor to HEC Chairman
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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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APPROVAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Team Leader(s):</th>
<th>Tazeen Fasih, Francisco Marmolejo, Karthika Radhakrishnan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved By</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguards Advisor:</td>
<td>Maged Mahmoud Hamed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19-Nov-2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Manager/Manager:</td>
<td>Cristian Aedo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20-Nov-2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country Director:</td>
<td>Melinda Good</td>
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