

# **K-19 Task Force**

## **Minutes of Meetings October 24, 2022**

### **Agenda**

- Review of the progress of the Task Force's first year with stakeholders in the KRG
- Solicitation of names of those to participate in next round of workshops
- Inform of the upcoming public event to share research and proposals with larger audience

**9:00**

### **Ministry of Planning**

Minister Dara Rashid Mahmud

**10:30**

### **Council of Ministers**

President of the Diwan of Council of Ministers Umed Sabah Othman  
Senior Advisor to the PM, Dr. Karzan Karim  
KRG Spokesperson, Jotiar Adil

**11:30**

### **Ministry of Education**

Minister Alan Hama Saeed Salih

**1:00**

### **Ministry of Higher Education**

Minister Aram Mohammad Qadir  
Deputy Minister Dr. Abdulfattah Abdulrazzaq Mahmood

### **Attending from Task Force**

Bashdar Sarbaz, MoE

Shelan Khalil, MoE.

Dr. Amanj Saeid, MoHESR

Dr. Mohammad Ahmed, MoHESR

Dr. Zana Ibrahim, UKH

Kirstin Crawford, UKH

Dr. Soran Saeed, Sulaimani Polytechnic

AbdulSalam Medeni, Rwanga

Behar Ali, Emma Organization for Human Development

Dr. Naznaz Muhamad, Formerly of the Education Committee, Parliament,

Vida Hanna, CUE

Dr. Honar Issa, AUK

Dr. Randall Rhodes, AUK

## Agenda

White papers were distributed to the Ministries prior to the visits to inform of the topics of conversation.

Visits followed the identical format:

1. Dr. Randall Rhodes made introductory remarks on the purpose of the meeting – to inform stakeholders and ask for advice on who to include in such conversations in the future
2. There were three short reports on the principal topics covered in the past year and into the next year: University Admissions & TVET, K-12 Curriculum Development, Early Childhood.
3. The hosts made comments, asked questions, made recommendations on whom to include in the upcoming workshops

## General Comments from all Meetings

- Much of the content mentioned by the TF matches the Vision 2030; this connection should be stressed as it will reinforce the TF's proposals
- Focus on improvement of quality across the educational system
- Focus on education as the pathway to employment, in respect to the individual's development, but also the advancement of the economy of Kurdistan
- Ensure the audience understands that the introduction of the University Entrance Exam does not limit access to higher education; it simply is another metric for admission decision-making. This could be a first step for the MoHESR and individual universities to consider a variety of metrics and assess the applicant in a more holistic framework.
- If there is greater autonomy for universities in the interpretation of admission metrics, universities will become more distinctive in their student populations and programs offered.
- There must be a rebalancing of the post-secondary school population between TVET programs and bachelor's program. The former provides a more direct pathway to employment.
- It seems that the KRG is fully on board regarding the importance of TVET; focus now needs to be placed on the establishment of the framework for its successful launch and sustainability.
- Curricula across the educational system need to teach soft skills and Arabic fluency to improve students' career preparedness; they must be adaptable to the jobs throughout Iraq.
- Family and child protection is a pivotal issue as this is the social foundation upon which an ethical and responsible citizenry is built; education must reinforce this

agenda through a greater focus on life skills and social responsibility. Civil society can play a role in developing this educational/cultural framework.

### Outcomes

All sessions were cordial and supportive of the efforts made to reform and advance education. The hosts ranked the importance of the topics differently, though commented on the need for reform and challenges in its implementation.

They agreed to think about additional stakeholders to invite to the workshops; focus was on additional persons within the ministries.

### Next Steps

There needs to be further contact with those visited in order to get stakeholder lists for the workshops.

TF members' and the target audiences' schedules for the remainder of the year are quite full. It was suggested to schedule the day of workshops at the very end of November, possibly the 27-30. This has yet to be confirmed. There needs to be a thorough review of upcoming events to ensure no conflicts.

The workshops will be held concurrently. On the same day, there will be four rooms set for each of the four topics. A member of the TF will lead the conversation – present research conducted over the past year and the reforms suggested. The format will be an open discussion debating the proposals/reforms; a SWOT analysis addressing the implementation of the specific proposals may be a possible format.

After these workshops, the feedback will be reviewed by the TF and incorporated into the documents/proposals as appropriate. The revised proposals/visions will be presented at a large, public event sometime in February.