**K-19 Task Force**

**Minutes of Meeting, 10:00, August 26, 2024**

**Rwanga Foundation, Empire Tower 4**

**Agenda**

* Workgroups on K-12 Curriculum and TVET
  + Reporting out on discussions since July meeting
* Review of documents from KAAE

**Attending** (alphabetical order)

Abdurrahman Wahab, TIU

Behar Ali, Emma Organization for Human Development

Kirstin Crawford, UKH

Dr. Mohammed Hussein Ahmed, Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research

Dr. Naznaz Muhamad, former Education Committee, Kurdistan Parliament

Dr. Randall Rhodes, AUK

Sarkhell Sirwan Nawroly, SPU (online)

Sherine Hassan, AIS

Syako Sulaiman, Jobs.krd (online)

Dr. Zana Ibrahim, UKH

Unable to attend:

AbdulSalam Medeni, Rwanga

Bashdar Sarbaz Mawlud, Ministry of Education

Dr. Galawezh Obaid Osman, MP, Education Committee

Dr. Honar Issa, Scretary-General KAAE

Joanne Ball, Cambridge International School

Shelan Khalil, Ministry of Education

Dr. Soran Saeed, Kurdistan Technical Institute

Vida Hanna, CUE

**Meeting called to order at 10:05**

**KAAE**

To accommodate the schedules of those attending, the documents from KAAE were discussed first. Dr. Mohammed Hussein Ahmed gave background on KAAE and the roll out of the accreditation agenda. The workshop held earlier this summer plus individual meetings with university administrations were described as pathways for the solicitation of feedback on the proposed Standards and Procedures for Accreditation. There was a very brief overview of the documents distributed. Members were encouraged to individually review the documents and send their comments/feedback directly to Dr. Honar Issa, who will be updating the documents and sharing again with stakeholders. The final documents will need approval from the Council of Ministers.

Other points:

* AUK, AUIS, UKH, Salahaddin, UoD, and UoS were specifically mentioned as being the first universities to engage in and pilot the process.
* It is important that this American model be sensitive to the Kurdistan higher education context.
* The TF is characterized as supporting the accreditation effort; members of the TF can serve as facilitators in national conversations on accreditation.
* The objective of accreditation is to introduce a culture of quality assurance across the higher education ecosystem; the raising of standards will bring greater recognition to regional universities.
* Members of the TF can participate in workshops staged in each governorate; a workshop is currently scheduled in Sulaimani for September 12.

Further discussion focused on the relationship between KAAE and the MoHESR. Dr, Mohammed explained that the “first party” is the university; “second party” is the MoHESR (who licenses institutions); “third party” is the KAAE (the agency that conducts period reviews). As in the U.S. the accrediting agency is an independent entity that upholds the Standards, conducts measurement and evaluation of institutions as per best practices in peer review. The KAAE works with universities to identify gaps and coach them to remedy deficiencies and excel. A principal question was what the MoHESR will do with the determinations/recommendations coming from KAAE. Will the MoHESR impose consequences for institutions that do not meet the Standards? Will there be implications in their funding, enrollments, research funding?

It is expected that the TF will hear more in the coming months as the roles/duties/responsibilities of KAEE are further defined. As stated previously, members of the TF are encouraged to provide their individual feedback to Dr. Issa.

**Workgroup on K-12 Curricular Framework**

In the two group sessions conducted in the past month, documents and templates for frameworks were discussed. These included: the recent Law on Education, guidelines for curriculum building, and frameworks from Qatar Foundation and the UAE. The first is to be sourced for the adoption of the educational philosophy of K-12 education, and the others as samples of formatting of the framework/curriculum.

The work group had an online session with Michael Bartlett, education specialist now in UAE. He suggested the following:

* Focusing on the skills students need rather than knowledge details. What a student needs to know or can do at key academic moments – grades 2, 9, 12.
* Involving stakeholders in discussions of their expectations for the educational system and the outcomes students should achieve; once the consensus is reached, then the framework can be developed.
* Developing measurement tools focused on those skill-related outcomes that will assess students’ achievement, progress, and attainment. This data will inform the curriculum (re)design.

The conversation also mentioned that it is possible to adopt and off-the-shelf curriculum (e.g. Australian); the College Board also has the capacity to conduct site-specific research and write the framework/curriculum.

The TF is willing to prepare workshops for the ministries, educational sector, and stakeholders on the above.

Regarding the UAE, education was tied to the national agenda and the development of a productive workforce and citizenry. Teacher preparation, hiring, and continuous professional development are key elements in the advancement of K-12. Every year, schools undergo inspections by teams of peers (quality assurance units).

Kirstin Crawford introduced the French model. Points included:

* The K-12 framework is composed of 5 cycles, each with identified skills/objectives.
* Skills/dispositions/objectives include: citizenship, culture, respect, self-identity, independent learning, language proficiency, problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, group work, applied learning. These focus on the holistic development of the student.
* There are outcomes for each skill to be measured as per the cycle. If students demonstrate achievement of the outcomes, then they can progress to next level.
* While focus is on students attaining fluency and proficiency in these skills, the teachers have autonomy in designing the lesson plans and ensuring that such skills are infused across the lessons.
* Textbooks are only tools and not at the center of the learning process.
* After the fourth cycle (after Grade 9), students take the French national benchmarking exam with final oral presentation and written exams.
* In the fifth cycle, students elect the science or social science track.
* After the fifth cycle (after Grade 12), students prepare for the French baccalaureate exam that measures readiness for entrance to French universities.

**Workgroup on TVET**

Due to the unavailability of the Chair of the Workgroup, it was decided to postpone the presentation until the next group meeting.

**Meeting Schedule**

Due to the travel schedules of members, no clear date for the next meeting was cited. It appears that the next opening may be during the third week of September. A separate email will be sent out with potential dates.

Kirstin Crawford will check on the status of the shared drive, which was established previously. Now that the TF will be collecting reports and documentation, it would be beneficial to have one e-warehouse for the posting of items of interest.

Thanks.

**Meeting adjourned at 1:00.**