USAID | AFGHANISTAN
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

March 15, 2017

The Honorable Minister
Mr. Shafiq Samim,
Acting Minister of Education
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Subject: Endorsement of Afghanistan's National Education Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021

Dear Acting Minister Samim:

In USAID's role as Coordinating Agency for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), I am pleased to write on behalf of the Education Sector Working Group (ESWG) representing the education development partners in Afghanistan to express the ESWG's full endorsement of the third National Education Strategic Plan (NESP III) 2017- 2021.

The final NESP III has been the result of an extensive collaborative process between the Ministry of Education (MoE) and development partners over the past two years. The external appraisal began in late 2015 and was followed by a partial endorsement of NESP III in October 2016. The NESP III Operational Plan was then developed and both NESP III documents were fully appraised in early March 2017. A meeting was held at the U.S Embassy on March 13, 2017 to discuss the full endorsement. A unanimous decision to fully endorse NESP III was reached by the development partners during this meeting.

The Appraisal team's conclusion is "that the NESP III is a well prepared, comprehensive and sound strategic document for the education sector in Afghanistan, resulting from a highly participative process, and that its Operational Plan, although remaining ambitious and needing a clearer sequencing in some areas, is a well thought out and well-designed instrument to bring all stakeholders together for its implementation and monitoring." It should be noted that the MoE will still need to provide further clarity on un-costed budget items and funding sources. Financing gaps that are anticipated to be larger than what is presented in the NESP III and firmer commitments on domestic financing will also need to be addressed prior to implementation.

The NESP III includes three main sections:

1. Quality and Relevance
2. Equitable Access
3. Efficient and Transparent Management

This format is a change from previous NESP documents, which focused primarily on the institutional organization of the MoE. NESP III includes a detailed analysis of Risks and Mitigation Strategies as well as a Monitoring Matrix providing the annual targets that will be monitored by the MoE and the development partners over the five year period. These will help to demonstrate whether the Plan is on track and will allow adjustments to the Operating

Plan where needed. As stated in the NESP III summary, Afghanistan is a post conflict society and it is important to prepare skilled and competent citizens through the education system to sustain Afghanistan's socioeconomic development and social cohesion. The NESP III addresses this by providing better education opportunities to the people of Afghanistan.

The ESWG is pleased to endorse the NESP III and is confident that in partnership with the Ministry of Education, teachers, parents, children, development partners and Civil Society Organizations, the successful implementation of the NESP III will result in improved quality, relevance, and access of education, as well as efficient and transparent management.

Sincerely,

Herbert Smith
Mission Director
USAID/Afghanistan

Cc: Alice Albright
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USA

Development Partners Endorsement:

USAID	endorsed via this letter	Date: 03/15/2017
AUSTRALIA:	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
CANADA:	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
DFID:	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
DENMARK	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
FINLAND	endorsed via email	Date: 03/15/2017
GERMANY	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
NORWAY	endorsed via email	Date: 03/15/2017
SWITZERLAND	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
SWEDEN	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
UNESCO	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
UNICEF	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017
WORLD BANK	endorsed via email	Date: 03/14/2017