Annual Report 2023-24

Higher Education Commission, Pakistan

Scholarships

Research

Innovation

Infrastructure

Quality

Capacity-Building

Smart-Universities

University-Sports

HEC MISSION

"To facilitate the institutions of higher learning to serve as an engine of socio-economic development of Pakistan."

CONTENTS

1. Chairman Message	
2. Executive Summary	
3. Human Resource Development	1
4. Research & Innovation	49
5. Quality Assurance Division	77
6. Quality Assurance Agency	89
7. Information Technology	99
8. Academics Division	119
9. Curriculum Division	125
10. Attestation and Accreditation	133
11. Planning and Development	139
12. Finance Division	143
13. National Academy of Higher Education	149
14. Higher Education Development in Pakistan	179
15. Higher Education Data Repository	195
16. Research & Analysis Activities Section	207
17. Global Engagement	215
18. Parliamentary Business and Coordination	221
19. Sports & Co-curricular Activities Division	225

Chairman Message



For more than two decades now, Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has been instrumental in institutional building, setting quality standards, human resource development, and capacity building for the uplift of country's higher education sector. Being the cornerstone of this highly pivotal sector, HEC has been moving ahead with a holistic approach with its focus on the core areas of access, quality and relevance. It has made immense headways in theses areas owing to the persistent support of successive governments. Nonetheless, there is a long way to go.

The aim is to provide our youth with an enabling environment to grow, play their part in a brighter future of our generations, and put their footsteps on the pathways leading towards the well-being of humanity. Pakistan is blessed with a youth bulge, and we are confident that the youth of our country are second to none in whatever profession they choose for themselves. Such a vibrant and dynamic youth population has a great potential to make Pakistan proud and outstandingly emerge as a South Asian leader in the higher education sector. This is up to all of us – the guardians of these young people– that whatever role we are in, either the parents or the teachers, the leaders or the academic mentors, to either turn them into a demographic dividend and the greatest asset or leave them to the mercy of ever-evolving world. I am of the firm belief that upbringing and exploiting the potential of our young kids is the real axis of development in any other arena of the state. HEC is committed to empowering them by strengthening the universities, which are the backbone of this axis.

Our higher education institutions offer a beacon of hope and promise in the face of the prevailing maze of challenges. Nobody denies the fact that nations make progress only when they strengthen their higher education system. A well-developed education sector fosters innovation, economic growth, and social progress. It empowers individuals, cultivates critical thinking, and drives technological advancements. By investing in higher education, countries create skilled professionals who contribute to national development. Strong universities and research institutions pave the way for scientific discoveries, economic stability, and global competitiveness. Without a robust education system, progress remains stagnant, and societies struggle to keep up with the rapidly evolving world.

With every passing year, HEC remains steadfast in pursuing its vision despite challenges. Given the peerless and unprecedented scientific and technological advancement, HEC is pragmatically aligning its policies with the prerequisites of world-class higher education systems to have market-ready graduates, critical thinkers, and visionary leaders. With its focused efforts, HEC is eyeing the graduates to be pioneers in problem-solving and thus contributing meaningfully to the national growth. It is looking forward to having in our universities and higher education degree awarding institutions a body of well-trained faculty and academic leaders who adeptly hone the talent of Pakistani nation.

Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed

Executive Summary

In the lives of nations, knowledge and its application are the driving force to make progress in real terms socially and economically. They are the true catalyst for transformation. This necessitates strenuous efforts and investment in the higher education sector. For the past over two decades, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) has been perseveringly putting efforts, with the governments' support, for the holistic development of higher education sector. Irrespective of the financial restraints haunting the sector badly for the past few years, HEC has been struggling to maintain the upward trajectory and dynamism to position the country for keeping pace with the knowledge-driven world economies.

This report delineates, in detail, the state of higher education in 2022-23. During the year, HEC disbursed Rs. 43.373 billion to higher education institutions for 154 development projects and took a number of new initiatives.

The role of human resource development in the development of higher education sector at large is very crucial. HEC invests a remarkable portion of its funds in this area, by awarding scholarships and fostering international partnerships. These measures not only benefit Pakistani youth but also attract foreign students. Under the HEC's Overseas Scholarships initiative only, 288 scholars were sent abroad for PhD in 2022-23. With its commitment to promoting higher education throughout Pakistan, HEC never forgets the less developed areas of the country. HEC awards scholarships to students from Balochistan and erstwhile FATA under different schemes.

Likewise, HEC paid due attention to research and innovation and made headways in its flagship initiatives such as National Research Programme for Universities, Technology Development Fund, Offices of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation, Business Incubation Centres, and award of funds and grants. HEC aims at ensuring that the higher education institutions are fully utilising their research capabilities and are nurturing commercialisation of relevant and marketable research. HEC facilitates universities to organise their research activities under the umbrella of ORICs. HEC recognised eight ORICs in 2022-23, taking the total number of ORICs in Pakistani HEIs to 85. During the year, HEC approved 458 ORICs research proposals for funding.

A comprehensive ICT plan of HEC envisages providing means and resources to higher education institutions for strengthening computing and telecommunications infrastructure. During 2022-23, Pakistan Education and Research Network (PERN) has been expanded to more than 400 higher education institutions. Now, over 50,000 researchers at the Pakistani universities are able use of this network. Twenty-four HEIs were successfully provisioned with smart university facilities making a total of 84 smart campuses and 96 smart universities. In the ICT realm, HEC's programes like Enrolment of Education Solutions (EES), Imagine Cup, Digital Learning and Skills Enrichment Initiatives have a lot of progress to cherish.

To ensure quality of education and research and discourage malpractices at the institutional and programme levels, HEC's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) systematically implements the quality enhancement procedures and criteria to attain international compatibility and competitiveness. Its efforts have culminated in a series of policy advancements, aimed at assuring and enhancing the quality of higher education provided by Pakistani higher education institutions. The HEC Commission approved the revised policy renamed as "Graduate Education Policy 2023" and it was circulated among HEIs for adoption. The Division issued 971 NOCs for MS/MPhil or equivalent and PhD programmes in the year. Besides, QAA reviewed 580 programmes of 20 universities including 354 MPhil and 226 PhD programmes. The Quality Assurance Agency launched the revamped Quality Assurance Framework which is making contribution to SDGs.

HEC never overlooks the significance of co-curricular and sports activities for the universities youth. During 2022-23, the HEC Sports Division organised different inter-university sports competitions for men and women in provinces and the federal capital.

The report ahead reflects how HEC has been paying due attention to all important dimensions of development in sector. HEC believes that higher education must be one of the top priorities for the national development, and it is hoped that the Pakistani HEIs will keep on getting adequately enabled and strengthened -- financially and in terms of infrastructure as well as faculty development -- to produce highly educated graduates who could play a leading role in turning the country into a knowledge-based economy.

Human Resource Development Division

Introduction

Human Resource Development (HRD) Division of HEC plays a pivotal role in development of skilled and trained manpower by providing multiple opportunities of scholarships (Indigenous and Overseas) at undergraduate, graduate and post-doctorate levels across the country in line with the national development goals. This development is indispensable for nurturing nationally marketable skills as well as for producing a proficient workforce, capable of confronting dynamic global challenges in the world of knowledge-based economies today.

HEC as the regulatory body is committed to developing the higher education sector by making quality higher education accessible and cultivating a research culture across all the higher education institutions in the country. HRD, also known as, Scholarship Division is characterised by integral support and strategic alignment with HEC's core objectives and key initiatives while adhering to quality standards and efficient service delivery. The mandate of HRD Division is the augmentation of human resource, especially students pursuing studies or having graduated at university level, faculty and researchers. HRD efforts encompass a spectrum of initiatives, including scholarship programmes for higher studies and research, designed to produce qualified human capital, carry out faculty development, and enhance research capabilities as well as administrative adeptness. To this end, HRD Division collaborates with domestic and international partners, such as universities, research bodies, and donor agencies.

The HRD scholarship initiatives serve as crucial tools for unlocking educational opportunities and driving cutting-edge innovation. This aid removes financial barriers impeding access of many to higher education, thus empowering Pakistani youth from diverse backgrounds to achieve academic excellence. Recipients of these scholarships become catalysts for positive change in the society through community engagement and visionary leadership to address social issues. At present, different indigenous and international scholarships are being offered through Scholarship Division. The detail of PSDP funded scholarships budgeted during the financial year 2023-24 is tabulated as below:

PSDP Funded Development Projects executed by HEC, HRD Division during FY: 2023-24

During the financial year 203-24, a total of 20 PSDP funded development projects were budgeted. Out of 20, two projects were new initiatives. The list of projects is tabulated as under:

In Millions

SN	Name of the Projects	Approved Cost	PSDP Allocation (revised)
Ongoing Projects/Initiatives			
1.	Academic and Research Linkages with different countries/ agencies under Bilateral Agreement - HEC (Revised)	405.720	40.560

2.	Award of Allama Muhammad Iqbal 3000 scholarships to Afghan students (Prime Minister's Directive)	7,352.541	1,500.000
3.	Award of scholarship to students from Gwadar -HEC	165.113	11.400
4.	Faculty Development Programme for Pakistani Universities (Revised)	7,142.000	180.000
5.	Fulbright Scholarship Support Program HEC-USAID (Phase-III)	4,059.195	1,000.000
6.	Human Resource Development Initiative MS Leading to PhD Program of Faculty Development for Engineering Universities/ UESTPs (HEC)	11,806.139	120.000
7.	Indigenous PhD fellowship for 5000 Scholars, HEC (Phase-II)	9,972.593	340.000
8.	Law Graduates Scholarship Programme for Balochistan for Study Abroad	420.980	40.000
9.	Master Leading to PhD Scholarships Programme (Indigenous and Overseas) for the Students of Balochistan (An Initiative of the Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan Package) HEC	3,138.692	198.000
10.	Overseas Scholarship for MS/M. Phil leading to Ph.D. in selected fields (Phase III) - HEC (Revised)	22,214.578	3,495.000
11.	Pak-Sri Lanka Higher Education Cooperation programme	2,287.739	210.000
12.	PAK-USAID Merit and Needs Based Scholarship Program (Phase-II)	5,332.490	212.711
13.	PhD Scholarship Program under Pak-US Knowledge Corridor (Phase-I)-(Revised)	25,226.274	2,280.000
14.	Post-Doctoral Fellowship Programme Phase III (HEC)	2,770.915	99.641
15.	Provision of Higher Education Opportunities for Students of Balochistan and FATA (Phase-II) (HEC)	2,983.698	274.150
16.	Scholarship Programme for the students of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) in Top Pakistani universities-institutions (GB)	648.676	100.298
17.	Science Talent Farming Scheme (STFS) for Undergraduate Programmes – HEC	1,530.346	1.470
18.	Coastal Region Higher Education Scholarship Programme for Balochistan	385.437	17.000
New Projects/Initiatives			
19.	Provision of Higher Education Opportunities for Students of Balochistan and FATA (Phase-III)	8,663.350	255.000

20.	Allama Muhammad Iqbal Scholarships for Afghan National Students (Phase III)	12,702.340	67.000
	Total (Rs in millions)	**129,208.816**	**10,442.230**

In addition to PSDP-funded development projects, HRD Division has also executed schemes funded by HEC through recurring budget, likewise; HEC Need-based Scholarship Programme for Undergraduate Students, International Research Support Initiative Programme (IRSIP) for PhD scholars to avail international exposure and Faculty Exchange Programme to enhance teaching and research collaborations of faculty from Pakistani HEI's with partner institutions around the world.

During the financial year 2023-24, HEC faced multiple challenges, likewise, restrictions on creation of new liabilities, foreign exchange cover limitations and high inflation rate that affected living cost of HEC funded scholars in foreign countries. Despite all these challenges, HEC managed to fulfill its financial obligations keeping in view the abidance of austerity measures taken by the Government of Pakistan.

Section 1: Foreign Funded Scholarships Offered through HEC

Advertisements of international scholarship opportunities offered officially to HEC, Government of Pakistan by foreign governments/donors for Pakistani students are regularly uploaded on HEC website, calling students to apply online in reputed foreign universities for BS/MS/PhD and fellowships. These scholarship opportunities include:

Foreign Funded Scholarships	
I.	Academic & Research Linkages with Different Countries under Bilateral Agreement - Hungary Scholarships (Funded by Government of Hungary and Pakistan/PSDP)
II.	Chinese Government Scholarships
III.	Commonwealth Scholarships (Offered through CSC, fully funded by UK)
IV.	Erasmus Mundus Scholarships (Funded by European Union)
V.	Huawei Seed for Future Training Programme
VI.	Foreign funded scholarships offered through Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EAD and Foreign Embassies/Missions (Learning opportunities abroad)

I. Academic & Research Linkages with Different Countries under Bilateral Agreement - Hungary Scholarships (Funded by Government of Hungary and Pakistan/PSDP)

The project worth Rs. 340.357 million was approved by CDWP in August 2016 to award 240 scholarships to Pakistani students for BS, MS and PhD studies in Hungary. The scholarship emoluments include tuition fee, monthly stipend, free dormitory place/ monthly contribution for accommodation, medical insurance, and one return air ticket. Later, the project was revised by CDWP in July 2018 and the number of scholarships for Pakistani students to study in Hungarian universities was first increased to 480 and later to 1040.

In addition to the award of scholarships to Pakistani students, two other components were added in the revision of PC-1 of the project, i.e., 100 scholarships worth Rs. 147.24 million for students of least developed countries of OIC and 10 scholarships worth Rs. 11.2 million for students from the least developed countries of Commonwealth.

A total of 1003 scholarships have been awarded under this project. In the fiscal year 2023-24, as many as 123 Pakistani students availed fully-funded Stipendium Hungaricum scholarships and proceeded abroad to join their studies.



Chairman HEC, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed presents certificate to a student selected for study in Hungary. Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Hungary in Islamabad, Dr. Dora Gunsberger, is also present.

Success Story

Dr. Attia Batool



She is from the Punjab province and was selected for her PhD studies for the Stipendium Hungaricum Scholarship under the Project Title "Academic & Research Linkages in 2018, in the field of Physics at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. She completed her degree in 2022. Currently, she is working as **Assistant Professor at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad**.

Her journey at the University of Debrecen was very memorable due to the supportive faculty and helpful colleagues. It truly groomed her to excel in her career. Additionally, her five articles have been published in impact factor journal and one of her articles "**Temporal evolution of failure avalanches of the fiber bundle model on complex networks"** was selected for the main page of **Chaos**, an interdisciplinary journal of Nonlinear science.

- **Scholarships Offered to International Students of Least Developed Countries of Commonwealth**

Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting 2018 (CHOGM 2018) was held in April 2018 in the United Kingdom. The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) requested Government of Pakistan to extend its support for Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP)/Endowment Fund which provides scholarships to low as well as middle income countries.

In this regard, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad conveyed and recommended to ACU that Government of Pakistan would consider offering 10 scholarships to students of Commonwealth countries to study in Pakistani universities. Accordingly, HEC offered 10 fully-funded scholarships for 13 least-developed countries of Commonwealth under the project in the fields of social sciences, arts and humanities, management and business education, agriculture and veterinary sciences, and natural sciences/ physical sciences. Commonwealth scholarships are only offered for master's degree programmes. Thirteen least developed countries of Commonwealth include Bangladesh, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Uganda, Tanzania, Vanuatu and Zambia.

HEC received nominations routed through ACU/respective governments of least-developed countries of Commonwealth/Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan. HEC has already awarded 10 available slots.

The scope and objectives of this component are as under:

- To build Pakistan's image as an attractive educational destination
- Provide opportunity to Pakistani HEIs to gain the much-needed international recognition
- Improve global reputation and ranking of Pakistani HEIs
- Cultivate international students as long-term representatives of Pakistan in their respective countries
- Local Pakistani students shall be exposed to a more diverse peer group and receive greater international exposure

Country of Origin	Onboard	Completed	Grand Total
Malawi	1	3	4
Sierra Leone	-	3	3
Uganda	-	2	2
Zambia	-	1	1
Grand Total	1	**9**	**10**

➢ Scholarships Offered to National of Least-Developed Countries of OIC

Government of Pakistan announced scholarships in sciences, engineering, medicine, and agriculture for the students of least-developed countries of OIC in the 15th General Assembly Meeting of OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) held in Islamabad from May 31 to June 1, 2016. President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan also formally announced the provision of these scholarships in the first OIC Summit on Science and Technology in Astana (Kazakhstan) in 2017.

HEC received nominations routed through OIC General Secretariat/respective Governments of least-developed countries of OIC/Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan. Out of 85 available slots, HEC has awarded a total of 81 scholarships covering tuition fee, monthly stipend, hostel charges, book allowance and contribution to return air ticket.

OIC Scholarship (Countries)	Completed	Onboard	Grand Total
Afghanistan	2	7	9
Benin	2	9	11
Gambia	2	5	7
Guinea Bissau	0	2	2
Niger	2	0	2
Sierra Leone	7	7	14
Somalia	4	20	24
Syria	0	3	3
Togo	1	1	2
Uganda	0	2	2
Yemen	0	5	5
Grand Total	**20**	**61**	**81***

**For the remaining 4 slots, nomination are under process.*

II. Chinese Government Scholarships

The Chinese Embassy in Islamabad entrusted its national scholarship programme known as Chinese Government Scholarships (CGS) to HEC for providing nominations against seats allocated to Pakistan. Under this programme, designated Chinese universities offer a wide variety of academic programmes in science, engineering, agriculture, medicine, economics, legal studies, management, education, history, literature, philosophy and fine arts to Pakistani students. In 2023-24, HEC shared 69 nominations with Chinese Embassy in Islamabad.

III. Commonwealth Scholarships (Offered through CSC, Fully Funded by UK)

Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (CSC) mandated HEC with selection/ nomination of two different types of scholarship schemes for Pakistani students, i.e., Commonwealth General Scholarship for Master's and PhD programme, and exclusively for university teaching faculty. These both scholarship schemes focus on enhancing skills of professionals from general and academic fields, as CSC contributes to the development needs of Commonwealth countries by providing specialised training to professionals and academicians. CSC also contributes to UK's higher education and foreign policy objectives by encouraging collaboration and linkages. Since 2018, CSC has been inviting 66 nominations from HEC every year (26 for Master's degree programme, 30 for PhD programme under Commonwealth General Scholarships

and 10 for PhD Teaching Faculty initiative). Approximately, one-third of the nominated candidates is considered for final selection under open competitive basis.

IV: Erasmus Mundus Scholarship (Funded by European Union)

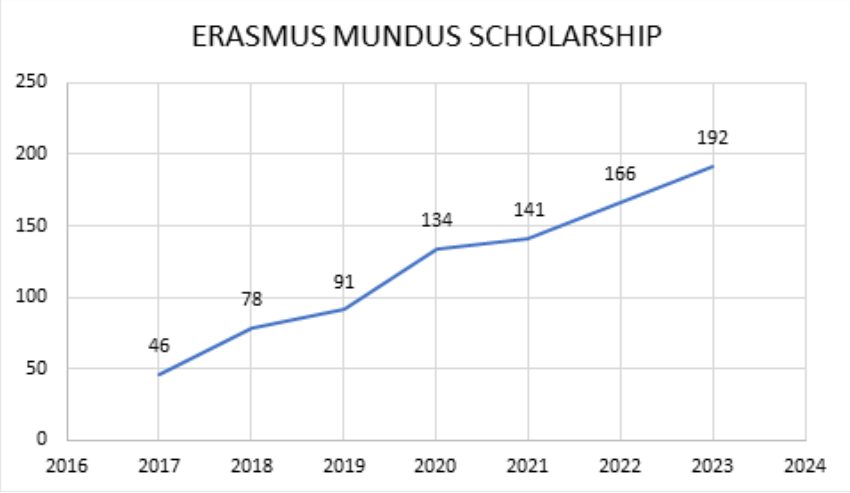
Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degree (EMJMD) Programme is an integrated international study programme, jointly delivered by an international consortium of higher education institutions. In 2016, HEC was invited to act as a flagbearer of Erasmus+ opportunities for Pakistan's masses. Since then, HEC has been taking proactive measures and making effective communication strategies to spread the word among the target population. The EU-funded EMJMD scholarships are awarded to the best applicants applying under annual selection rounds. Studies/research must take place in at least two of the programmes offering countries. Part of the studies may also take place in a partner country if there is a partner-country institution involved.

Erasmus+ programme has five main components.

- Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's and Erasmus Mundus Design Measures (Development of Joint Courses)
- Capacity Building for Higher Education (Joint projects in different study fields)
- International Credit Mobility (Exchange of students and faculty)
- Jean Monnet Activities (a short teaching programme or course in the field of European Union studies at higher education institutions)
- Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degree Scholarships

Following are the key achievements of the said programme:

- Pakistan has maintained 1st place in the world for the last three years, continuing a positive trend, as mentioned below.



- Pakistan is ranked first in the world for number of scholarships awarded, followed by India (146), Mexico (121) Bangladesh (119), Nigeria (97), and Brazil (84).
- A total of 2603 students from 137 countries were selected for the Erasmus Mundus scholarships.

- 189 Pakistani students were selected (including 88 girls) for the mentioned year.
- The countries of destination of the Pakistani students were: Austria (3), Belgium (20), Czechia (4), Estonia (3), Finland (13), France (43), Germany (6), Hungary (7), Greece (1), Ireland (4), Italy (16), Latvia (2), Malta (1), Netherlands (6), Norway (2), Poland (3), Portugal (21), Serbia (1), Slovenia (1), Spain (24), Sweden (3), Turkiye (1), and United Kingdom (4).

V: Huawei Seed for Future Training Programme

The Huawei Technologies (Pvt.) Ltd. Pakistan and HEC started the programme for training of Pakistani students studying at undergraduate level. Under the subject programme, HEC and Huawei organise onsite training for 14 outstanding Pakistani students in the field of ICT for a period of two weeks. The selected students gain valuable cutting-edge ICT knowledge (5G, Cloud, Artificial Intelligence, etc.) developed by Huawei's Headquarters and experience cross-cultural communication virtually. Since 2016-2023, a total of 188 Pakistani students have been selected who have successfully completed the training under the programme.

VI: Foreign Funded Scholarships Offered through Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EAD and Foreign Embassies/Missions (Learning Opportunities Abroad)

During the year 2023-24, HEC advertised and processed the following foreign-funded programmes. The process included a call for applications through advertisement, application receiving, scrutiny of documents, test/interviews, finalising merit and sending final nominations to the donor).

SN	Title of Scholarship	Donor Country	HEC Nominated Candidates
1	Postgraduate Scholarship Programme by Chulabhorn Graduate Institute	Thailand	05
2	Commonwealth Scholarships for faculty	UK	10
3	Moroccan Government Scholarships	Morocco	10
4	Chinese Government Scholarships	China	69
5	Commonwealth General Scholarships	UK	56
6	Huawei Seeds for Future	China	14
7	One Cuban Government Scholarships	Cuba	02
8	Hungarian Government Scholarships	Hungary	400

9	Erasmus Mundus Scholarships	Europe	189
10	University Politechnica Bucharest	Romania	04
Total			**759**

In addition, HEC also disseminated 14 foreign/donor-funded scholarship opportunities for Pakistani students through HE website and the achievement details are as mentioned below:

SN	**Achievements of FY 2023-24**	**Scholarships Awarded**
	Stipendium Hungaricum Scholarships (BS/MS/PhD)	257
	Chinese Government Scholarship Programme through China Scholarship Council	69
	Commonwealth Scholarship Programme through CSC	66
	Erasmus Mundus Scholarships	189
Total		**581**

Section 2: HEC-PSDP and Donor-Funded Scholarships Offered to Pakistani and Afghan Students

➢ HEC-DAAD German-Funded Scholarships Entitled 'Empower Future Female Afghan Leaders (EFFAL) Pakistan Track'

After the launch in February 2024, HEC invited applications for the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) to provide 200 scholarships (150 for Afghan students and 50 for Pakistani students) to attain higher academic degrees in all disciplines in the academic year 2024. The candidates included.

1- Both male and female Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan to pursue two-year master's degree in HEC-recognised universities in Pakistan.

2- Socio-economically marginalised groups of Pakistan in need for financial support regarding final two years of undergraduate studies (four years).

The programme aims at fostering intellectual capital and standardised internationally oriented higher education systems with the capacity to contribute to sustainable development. The scholarship programme is funded by DAAD through Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. For this purpose, scholarships for master's and bachelor's studies are awarded to individuals from Afghanistan and Pakistan respectively along with an admission at HEC-recognised universities in Pakistan.

- To prepare qualified graduates who are ready to deliver on responsible positions in/for their regions of origin
- To promote educational participation of women and underprivileged groups

The programme contributes to the following long-term impacts:

- Ensuring qualified professionals' involvement in the solution of development related problems of Afghanistan and Pakistan
- Enabling graduates to strengthen education and research in Afghanistan and Pakistan

a) 150 Afghan refugees -- both male and female Afghan refugees (Males: 105 and Females: 45) -- have been awarded fully-funded scholarships for Master's level studies in leading HEC-recognised public sector universities of Pakistan (National University of Sciences & Technology, University of Engineering and Technology Karachi, Institute of Management Sciences Peshawar, Quaid-e-Azam University, Health Services Academy Islamabad, University of Engineering and Technology Peshawar, Khyber Medical University Peshawar, Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences Quetta, University of the Punjab)

b) 50 female Pakistani students from socio-economically marginalised groups have

been offered financial support in the last two years of their undergraduate level study at five selected Pakistani universities.



A student receiving her certificate under the German Academic Service.

HEC-PSDP/USEFP Fulbright Scholarships for Pakistani Students

➢ Fulbright Scholarship Support Program (HEC-USEFP), Phase-II

The Fulbright Scholarship Support Program (HEC-USEFP) Phase-II was approved by CDWP in December 2015 with a capital cost of Rs. 3294.389 million for a duration of 108 months. Its administrative approval was issued in January 2016. A total of 816 Fulbright scholarships were to be awarded (550 scholarships for MS and 266 for PhD). Following were the objectives of this project;

- To train and develop human resources in their respective fields to act as change agents and deliver leadership roles
- To enhance knowledge building, intellectual capital and working capacity of higher education universities/degree awarding institutions
- To promote Total Quality Management to sustain the gains and maximise the opportunities for acquisition of quality higher education

The project was implemented successfully by HEC and partner agency (USEF). Keeping in view the success of the project, Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan decided to launch Phase-III of the project.

The achievement of Phase-II is tabulated as follows:

Program	PC-I Target	Awarded
MS (USEFP Share)	550	570
PhD (USEFP Share)	141	137
PhD (HEC Share)	125	125
Total	**816**	**832**

➢ Fulbright Scholarship Support Program (HEC-USEFP) Phase-III

In continuation of Phase-II, Fulbright Scholarship Support Program (HEC-USEFP) Phase-III was approved by CDWP in May 2021 with a capital cost of Rs. 4059.195 million for a duration of 108 months. A total of 816 Fulbright scholarships are being awarded (550 Scholarships for MS and 266 for PhD).

Following are the objectives of this project;

- To overcome the shortage of qualified manpower in the universities/R&D organisations
- To enhance capacity of Pakistani students, researchers as well as faculty of universities/DAIs
- To promote collaboration between Pakistani and US institutions

The achievement is tabulated as below:

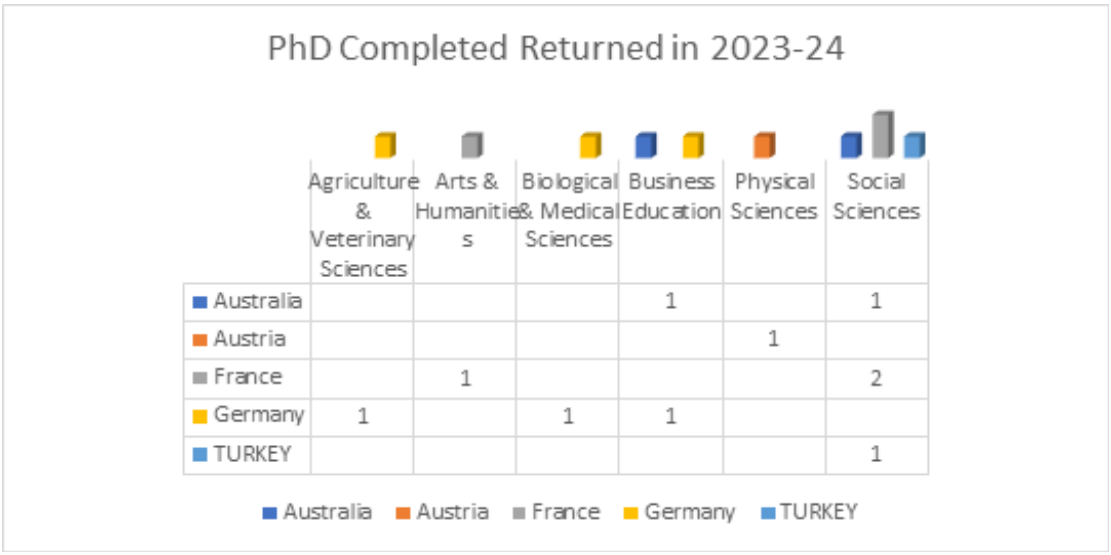
Program	PC-I Target	Awarded
MS	550	441
PhD (USEFP Share)	125	59
PhD (HEC Share)	141	71
Total	**816**	**571**

Section 3: HEC PSDP-Funded Overseas Scholarship Opportunities for Pakistani Students

Overseas Scholarships for PhD in Selected Fields (Phase-II)

The project was approved by ECNEC in April 2006 to award 2,000 MS/MPhil leading to PhD/Direct PhD scholarships at a cost of Rs. 13.216 billion. The project's objectives were defined keeping in view the needs of universities, R&D organisations and industry of Pakistan. Since its initiation, 1,876 candidates have been awarded PhD scholarships, while 1,371 scholars have successfully completed their degrees, including 10 scholars who completed their PhD in the FY 2023-24.

In FY 2023-24, the 10 overseas scholars who completed their PhD in different disciplines returned to Pakistan to serve the mandatory period as per agreement. The detail is as under.



Overseas Scholarships for PhD in Selected Fields (Phase-III)

The project was approved by ECNEC in May 2018 at a capital cost of Rs. 22,214.578 million with FEC Rs. 21,337.750 million. The objective of the project was to award 1800 overseas PhD scholarships in selected fields and 200 MS/MPhil scholarships in Engineering and Technology fields to meet faculty requirements of the already established/newly proposed skill/technical universities. The duration of the project was 84 months.

It is worth mentioning that another project entitled "Advanced Skills Development through International Scholarships (Phase-I)" was approved by ECNEC in January 2021 with a total cost of Rs. 13.361 billion. The sponsoring agency of this project was the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) and HEC was the executing agency. The project was dropped from PSDP of MoST. However, HEC being executing agency has already selected 40 PhD and 35 MS foreign scholarships for Pakistani and Azad Kashmir nationals in the world's top 25 ranked universities. The project was revised and subsequently its scope was rationalised with same capital cost -- from 2000 to 854 scholarships -- with provision of 75 scholarships in the world's top 25 leading universities.

Components of Scholarships

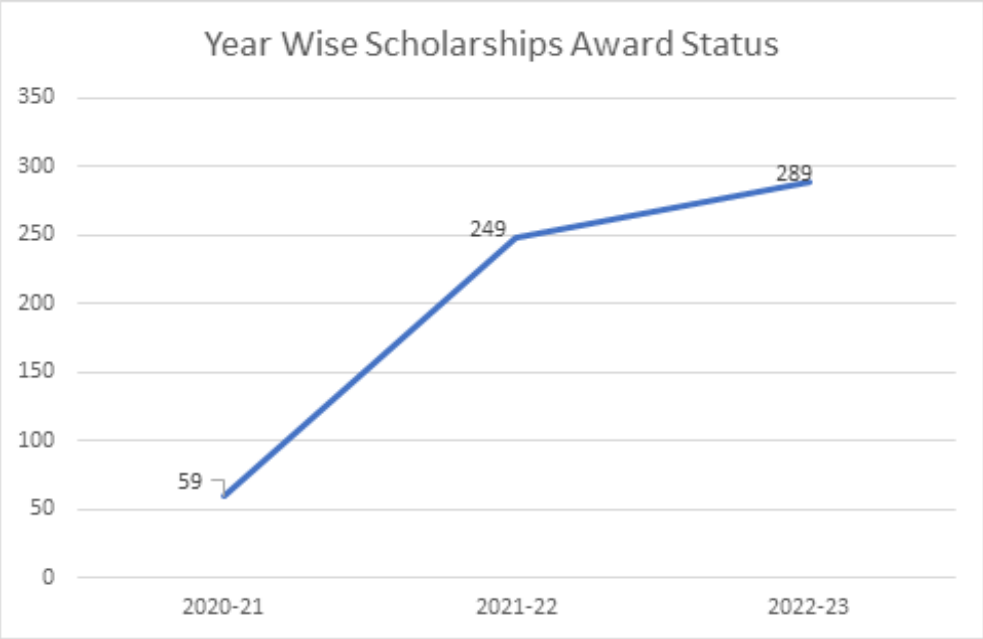


The overall scope of the project is as below.

Scholarships Category	Current Scope
PhD	
PhD Scholarships (General)	635
PhD Scholarships (75 Scholarships)	40
PhD Scholarships (ASDIS)	36
MS/MPhil	

MS/MPhil Scholarships (General)	80
MS/MPhil Scholarships (75 Scholarships)	35
MS/MPhil Scholarships (ASDIS)	28
Total	**854**

In the fiscal year 2023-24, a total of Rs. 3,495 million were allocated for this purpose. HEC's HRD Division successfully utilised the allocated amount. The year-wise award of scholarships which displays a consistent increase is as under.



The HEC provides equal opportunities to Pakistani nationals to participate in the scholarship programme. The gender wise distribution of awards is as follows:

SN	Achievements of Financial Year	Male Recipients	Female Recipients
1	2020-2021	37	22
2	2021-2022	172	77
3	2022-2023	191	98

Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, European Union, and Luxembourg Ms. Amna Baloch called on Chairman HEC

Ms. Amna Baloch, Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, European Union, and Luxembourg, visited HEC and called on Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman HEC, Ms. Aayesha Ikram, Director General (Scholarships) and Ms. Saima Naurin, Project Director (Overseas Scholarships).

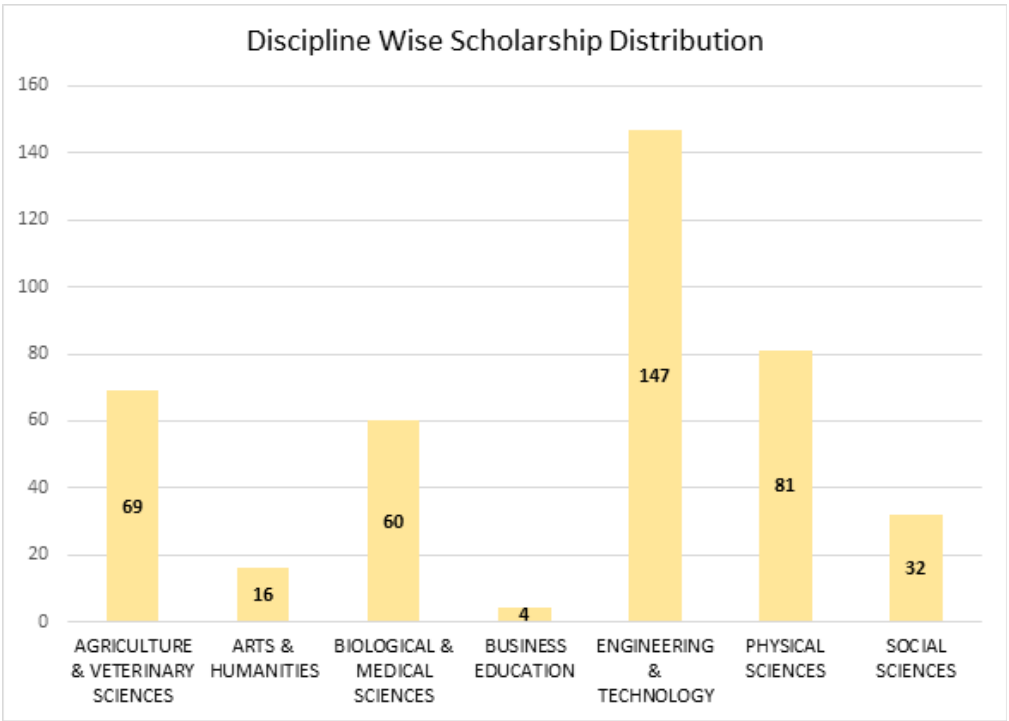
During the meeting, the two sides engaged in discussions about the challenges and opportunities for Pakistani overseas scholars. The Ambassador appreciated HEC

for providing opportunities to the Pakistani youth to pursue their higher studies at international universities, placing Pakistani scholars at different universities of Belgium and Europe after singing MoUs.



Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed presenting a soveniour to Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, European Union and Luxembourg, Ms. Amna Baloch.

HEC PSDP-Funded Project Entitled "US-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor PhD Scholarship Program"



The project Phase-I aiming at awarding scholarships to 1,000 PhD scholars at leading US universities was approved by ECNEC, Government of Pakistan, in January 2017. The overall cost of the project has been revised to Rs. 25,226.274 million with an extended implementation period to 132 months. The project objectives also include provision of academic opportunities to 10,000 Pakistani scholars over the next 10 years. Through this award, the scholars could also pursue doctoral studies at prestigious universities in the United States.

Since the project initiation, a total of 409 scholarships have been awarded. As of now, 22 scholars have successfully completed their PhDs and returned to Pakistan. Notably, in FY 2023-24, seven scholars have completed their PhDs in different disciplines and returned to serve their country.

Success Stories (FY 2023-24)



Mr. Noor Haleem: He has completed his PhD in Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering from South Dakota State University, USA. His research was focused on "Development of Innovative Flocculation Technologies for Agricultural Water Treatment". His thesis also addressed critical issues related to livestock wastewater and manure management, focusing on the mitigation of greenhouse gases and nutrient management in livestock operations. The thesis has led to five leading author and five co-authored peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations, fostering collaboration between Pakistani researchers and international experts.



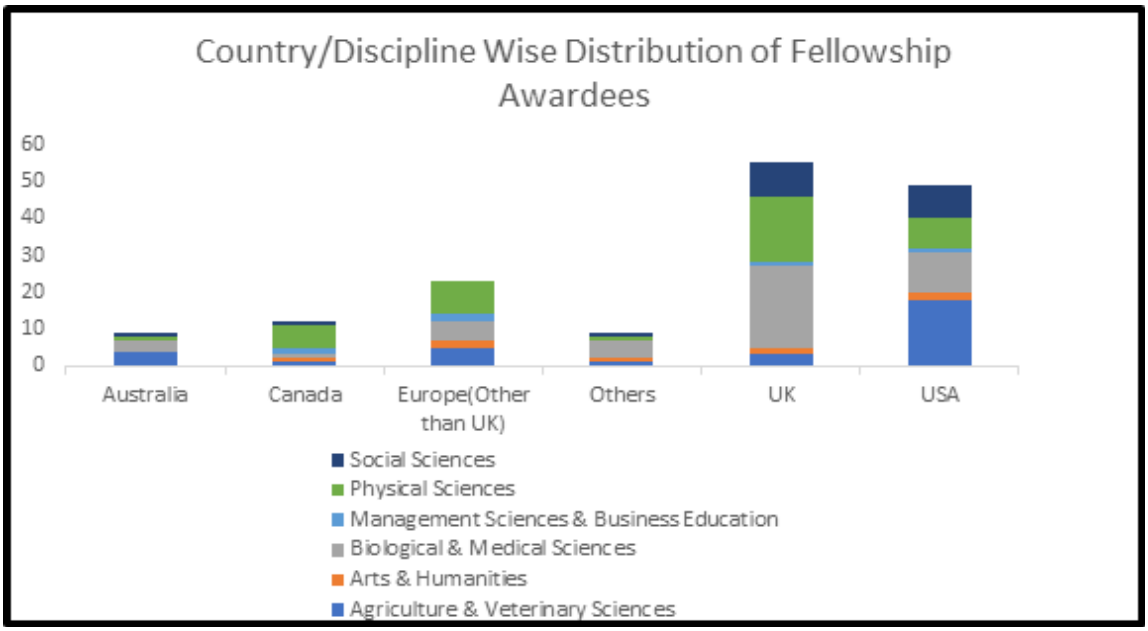
Mr. Rameez Ali Raja: He has completed his PhD in Geotechnical Engineering from Department of Civil Engineering, Purdue University, USA. His research was on "Load Response and Soil Displacement Fields for Shallow Foundations in Sand Using the DIC Technique". The research provided experience in the programming and machining of hydraulic actuators and allied testing components. Additionally, a novel image acquisition and analysis enhanced insights into the complex boundary value problems associated with footing penetration.

➢ HEC PSDP-Funded Project Entitled 'Post-Doctoral Fellowships Programme (Phase-III) – HEC'

The project entitled "Post-Doctoral Fellowships Programme (Phase III)–HEC" was approved by CDWP to award 1000 fellowships to the faculty members and researchers holding PhD degrees to work in the top-notch universities and state-of-the-art laboratories in technologically advanced countries. These fellowships are offered on open merit nationwide. Seventy percent slots are reserved for faculty members of public sector universities, while 15% slots are reserved for private universities and 15% slots for public sector R&D organisations (recognised by Pakistan Council of Science and Technology).

So far four batches have been advertised under the project and 220 candidates have been selected in the first three batches. The selection process under Batch-IV is in progress. A total of 150 scholars have completed their fellowship, while 26 scholars are working on research projects abroad.

During FY 2023-24, as many as 54 scholars completed their post-doctoral studies, while 14 scholars joined their research studies abroad.



Success Stories



Dr. Hina Raza: She is currently serving as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Pharmaceutics at Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU), Multan. She was awarded an HEC Postdoctoral Fellowship in 2020, which allowed her to conduct research at the School of Pharmacy, University College London (UCL), UK.

During her postdoc, she received training on advanced research equipment that is not available in Pakistan and established a research collaboration with the University of France.

After returning to BZU, she:

- Published 11 high-impact research articles in Q1 journals.
- Supervised 07 M.Phil. students.
- Had a research paper accepted for presentation at an international conference at the University of Birmingham, UK, for which she also received a travel grant.

Recently, Dr. Raza secured a £50,000 research grant, the largest ever received by BZU. This grant will be used to establish a high-tech research laboratory and support two Ph.D. students. She acknowledges the support of HEC Pakistan, stating that the postdoctoral fellowship played a crucial role in advancing her research career.

Dr. Majid Suhail Hashmi: He obtained a patent out of his research at Cornell University, USA under HEC Post-Doctoral Fellowship Programme Phase-III

Dr Majid pursued his PhD in Food Technology from Massey University, New Zealand availing HEC Overseas PhD scholarship in 2014. Upon completion, he joined The University of Agriculture, Peshawar.



In 2023, he joined the top-ranked Cornell University to pursue his post-doctoral research. Dr. Majid's research focused on "Evaluation of innovative non-destructive quality tools for fruits." He conducted investigations into non-destructive methods for assessing apple quality and advanced techniques for preservation of apples. During this time, his academic contributions extended to scholarly publications. The merit of his work is underscored by the publication of two manuscripts in impact factor W-category journals, namely Physiological and Molecular Plant Pathology, and European Journal of Plant Pathology.

Dr. Majid's research at Cornell University exhibits a significant innovation in the field of postharvest technology, with relevance to the fruit industry. He obtained a patent entitled "Method to increase storage life of 'Shughri' pear fruit and prevent postharvest fermented flavor through combination of short-term hypobaric and 1-Methylcyclopropene treatments". This patent establishes a novel technique that addresses a critical challenge in fruit preservation. By combining short-term hypobaric treatment with 1-Methylcyclopropene application, his method effectively extends the storage life of pears while maintaining their quality and preventing the development of off-flavors. This innovative approach not only has specific application for pear preservation but also holds potential for adaptation to other fruits. The patent's significance lies in its ability to reduce postharvest losses, extend market reach for fruit producers, and maintain fruit quality for consumers. In a display of scholarly engagement, Dr. Majid highlighted his research outcomes at the distinguished annual meeting of American Society of Horticulture Science (ASHS), held in Orlando, Florida, in 2023.

Dr. Imran Khan: He joined Superior University, Lahore after successful completion of Post-doctoral Fellowship at Cardiff University, UK sponsored by HEC.

Dr. Imran Khan was awarded a scholarship under HEC Post-Doctoral Fellowship Programme in the field of Computer Science to pursue research under the supervision of Dr. Omer Rana, a renowned professor in the field of intelligent systems and high-performance computing.



Dr. Imran joined the University of Cardiff to gain expertise specifically in the domain of blockchain and internet of things.

Access to state-of-the-art laboratories at Cardiff University, UK gave Dr. Imran a lifetime opportunity to perform experiments and achieve research objectives effectively. The School of Computer Science and Informatics, Cardiff University offers excellent facilities to conduct cutting-edge research in the blockchain, cyber security, and IoT domains.

In addition to laboratory work, he actively participated in seminars, workshops, and conferences held at Cardiff University, UK. These events facilitated him in the dissemination of knowledge and presenting his research findings to a diverse audience in the field of blockchain. Participation in the academic forums further enriched his research and opened new avenues for collaboration with Cardiff Metropolitan University, Ummul Qura University, and Newcastle University. With the expertise and support of these collaborators, Dr. Khan's research endeavors have facilitated the exchange of latest knowledge, profound insights and integrated approach into the subject matter.

Section 4: HEC PSDP-Funded Indigenous PhD Scholarship Opportunities for Pakistani Students

➢ Indigenous PhD Fellowship for 5000 Scholarships (Phase-I)

The project worth Rs. 6,394.537 million was approved by ECNEC in August 2003 to provide 5,000 PhD level scholarships to promote education in the local universities/ degree awarding institutions of Pakistan.

Indigenous PhD Fellowship for 5,000 scholars is the first mega scholarship project of HEC to encourage studies at local universities. The main objective of the project is to provide opportunities to enhance qualification and skills among youth as per international standards while also improve the R&D potential of public and private universities/DAIs and industrial sector. The project also aims to promote a competitive research culture among faculty and graduates at local universities.

The project has achieved 100 % objectives by awarding 5,000 scholarships. Till now, 88% of scholars have graduated and joined the economic mainstream of country, thus rendering a favourable impact in various fields including business and academia.

➢ Indigenous PhD Fellowship for 5000 Scholars (Phase-II)

Keeping in view the demand of PhD faculty and further progress of Phase-I, Planning Commission, Goverment of Pakistan approved the project Phase-II. The project worth Rs. 9972 million was approved by ECNEC in November 2011. The main objective of the project is to award 5000 MS-PhD and direct PhD scholarships in Pakistani universities. So far, 4252 candidates have been awarded MS-PhD and direct PhD scholarships under the project and 1960 candidates have completed their studies. During the year 2023-24, as many as 307 scholars completed their degrees.

Here is the success story of HEC scholar who has completed his higher studies (PhD)

Success Story

Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan Ali an HEC Indigenous Scholarship recipient, completed his PhD in Biotechnology in the field of Human Genetics from Gomal University in 2023. While conducting undergraduate research in BS Biotechnology, he focused on the genetic analysis of families with albinism. Subsequently, he proceeded for an MPhil degree in Biotechnology at Gomal University, where his research centred the genetic analysis of families inheriting autosomal recessive primary microcephaly. He was privileged to receive HEC Indigenous Scholarship during MPhil and successfully completed his PhD under the guidance of Dr. Muzammil Ahmad Khan. During his MPhil and PhD, he actively engaged in the genetic analysis of families afflicted with various

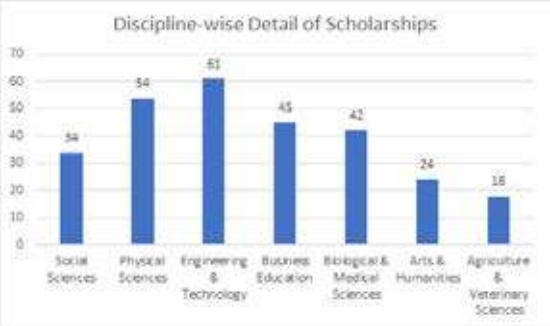


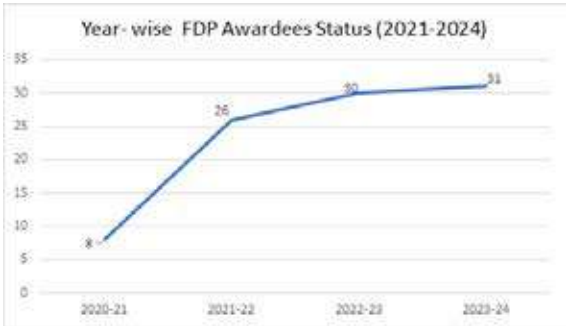
genetic disorders from diverse regions of Pakistan. His contributions include the publication of more than 13 articles in peer-reviewed journals and presentations at national and international conferences. He was honoured with the Best Oral Presenter award at the Annual Research Day at Quaid-e-Azam University, Pakistan. Additionally, he prepared a brochure to raise awareness among the general population about the risks associated with inheriting genetic disorders due to cousin marriages.

➢ Faculty Development Programme for Pakistani Universities (FDP)

The Faculty Development Programme is designed to train and develop non-PhD faculty in their respective practical fields so that they can contribute for academic and R&D activities. The project worth Rs. 7,142 million was approved by ECNEC in December 2016. The main objective is to support 2,000 non-PhD serving faculty members of public/private sector universities/DAIs, having a master's degree/minimum 18 years of education and an age limit of maximum 45 years. The Split PhD scholarship programme will only be offered to those Pakistani universities, which have linkages with the world recognised universities abroad for a maximum period up to 12 months.

Since its start in 2017, three batches of the programme have been advertised and a total number of 1,186 provisional award letters were given to faculty members across Pakistani universities. At present, 278 faculty members are being funded for their PhD studies while 28 have completed their studies. Out of 278 scholars, 95 have availed one year session abroad in reputed universities of the world. Batch-IV of the programme will be advertised soon after the approval of Revised PC-I of the project wherein the progress of the project shall be ensured at an accelerated pace.



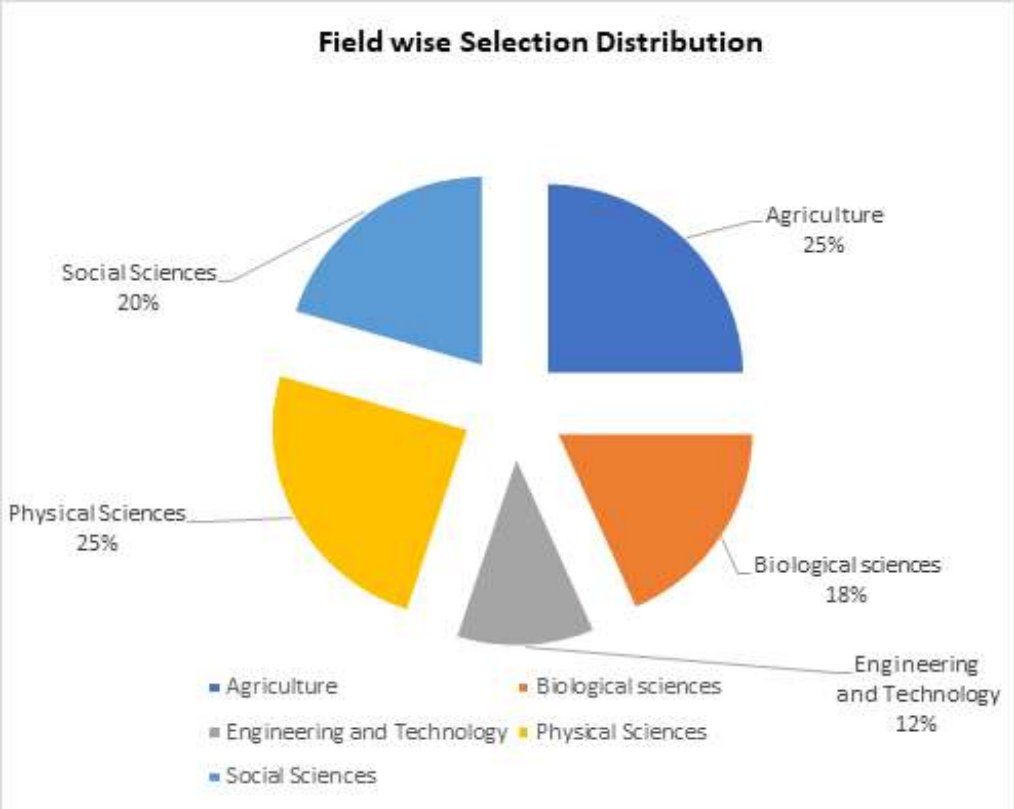


Section 5: HEC Initiatives for Undergraduate and PhD Students

➢ International Research Support Initiative Programme for PhD Scholars

HEC offers a six-month research fellowship to those native students, who are already enrolled as full time PhD students (minimum two years and maximum three and a half years duration of being enrolled as a PhD student subject to the approval of synopsis by Advanced Studies Research Board - ASRB) in Pakistani higher education institutions for top 200 universities of the world recognised by Times Higher Education or QS ranking systems. The fellowship provides opportunity of international exposure to PhD scholars, who are keen to enhance their quality of PhD research.

Progress FY 2023-24	
Scholarships Awarded	**Scholars Onboard**
260	160



HEC Need Based Scholarships Programme for Undergraduate Students Studying in Pakistani HEIs

The Government of Pakistan, through HEC, facilitates financially disadvantaged students through Need Based Scholarships. The programme's objective is to promote inclusiveness and to enhance the socio-economic status of students, providing them access to contemporary education and career opportunities, thereby paving the way for a more promising future.

Initiated in 2012, Need Based Scholarship Programme is financed through the annual recurring grant provided by HEC to 99 public sector universities in Pakistan. In the academic year 2023-24, a total of 3,464 scholarships have been granted to deserving students by 37 universities.

Section 6: Strategic Initiative of Government of Pakistan through HEC

➢ BISP (Benazir Income Support Programme) Scholarships for Under-graduate Students

Under an agreement with Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), HEC launched "BISP Scholarships for Undergraduates Project" erstwhile Ehsaas Scholarship Programme to provide merit and needs based scholarships to financially disadvantaged students especially, females studying in any HEC-recognised public sector university of Pakistan. Fifty percent of the scholarships are reserved for females. BISP is sponsoring the project whereas HEC is its implemention partner. The project's objectives are:

- Increase access of vulnerable population to higher education
- Facilitate creation of competent workforce and thus enhance employability
- Create a drive for education among those students who have discontinued studies due to limited financial resources

Financial and Physical Progress

Financial Year	New Scholar-ships Awarded	Funds Disbursed (Rs in billion)	No. of Enrolled Awardees	Batches
2019-20	50,762	4.82	50,762	Batch-I
2020-21	41,241	8.46	873,71	Batch I &II
2021-22	10,000 (last intake)	7.34	76,854	Batch I, II & III
2022-23	-	8.61	52,449	Batch I, II & III
2023-24	-	4.0	47,197	Batch I, II & III
Total	**102,003**	**33.23**	**-**	**-**

Region-wise Funds Disbursement to 134 HEIs in FY 2023-24

Regions	Funds Disbursed (PKR in million)
Azad Jammu &Kashmir	228.0
Baluchistan	93.0
Gilgit Baltistan	99.2
ICT	591.9
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	790.5
Punjab	1893.3

Sindh	402.1
Total	**4098.2**

The project is currently closed for any new intake and only enrolled students of three batches are being disbursed funds.

➢ USAID Funded Merit and Needs Based Scholarships Program

USAID has supported scholarships for meritorious but financially disadvantaged students since 2004 through the MNBSP program to assist the government of Pakistan's efforts to raise enrollment in Pakistani universities and meet international standards. Originally activated in eleven (11) universities, 1807 beneficiary scholarships in the fields of agriculture and business studies and established financial aid offices for the first time in Pakistani universities. Many of the graduates of this initial phase of MNBSP (Phase-I) were the first in their families to complete a higher education degree and nearly half of them are now supporting their families through respectable jobs.

USAID expanded the MNBSP (MNBSP, Phase II) in 2013 to go to 2020 at a total estimated cost of US$ 21.8 million. The expansion includes an increase to 4868 scholarships, of which 50% are targeted for females, additional disciplines such as social sciences, medical sciences, and engineering and 19 additional public and private sector partner institutions across Pakistan, bringing the total to 30 partner universities. New components of the program build capacity of participating institutions in designing operational, financial management, monitoring & evaluation processes and fund flow mechanism for implementing MNBSP. Selected students under the program are also trained through career path workshops to prepare them for future job challenges and make them aware of market trends.

MNBSP Objectives

- To enable the academically qualified, yet financially needy, Pakistani students to continue university studies in selected private and public universities of Pakistan in the fields of Agriculture, Medical, Business, Social Science and Engineering
- To enhance the institutional capacity of HEC, Government of Pakistan and local public and private universities

Progress in FY 2023-24: Scholarships and Capacity Building

The 2022 floods still have an intense impact on lives and livelihoods of sizeable population of Pakistan. The impact of the floods worsened the already existing gender inequalities, revealing serious differences in safety, education, decision-making, and employment. It has caused extensive damage to agriculture, industry and service sectors, estimated to be equivalent to 4.8 percent of GDP. After amendment to the agreement of Merit and Needs Based Scholarship Program, 530 scholarships were announced for students from flood-affected areas, out of which 50% of the scholarships

were reserved for females. The scholarships were announced in 30 partner universities for flood-affected students enrolled in any discipline.

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Number of Scholarships awarded in flood affected districts*	265	265	**530**

*Flood affected districts were notified by NDMA

Capacity Building Activities

Four workshops were organised for the staff of financial aid offices and faculty of 60 public and private sector universities under the program's capacity building component.

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Number of Universities' officials trained	97	64	**161**

In addition, two workshops on "Career Counseling and A Practical Guide to Soft skills" were also organised in Quetta and Peshawar for the scholarship awardees from flood-affected districts of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Number of flood-affected awardees trained	38	27	**65**

Success Stories

Mr. Kamran Khan: Hailing from Tarakai, Swabi, Mr. Kamran Khan, the son of a motor mechanic, faced immense challenges during his studies. While pursuing Civil Engineering at UET Peshawar, the devastating floods hit and severely damaged his house, affecting his family with waterborne diseases. Despite these challenges, Kamran's resolve never wavered. His family's struggle deepened when his mother had to sell her jewelry to bear medical expenses for necessary surgeries.



With the crucial support of USAID-MNBSP, Kamran was able to continue his education. He is about to graduate.

Looking to the future, Kamran is eager to continue his education. His goal is to enhance infrastructure of remote areas by encouraging builders to construct flood- and earthquake-resistant buildings. Through these efforts, he aims to uplift communities and contribute to their economic stability.



Ms. Kinza Sehar: A proud native of Bagh, Azad Kashmir, Ms. Kinza Sehar suffered the loss of her father at a young age. She had on her shoulders the responsibilities of being the eldest of three siblings. Despite the challenges, she remained focused on her education and excelled in her studies, achieving exceptional results in both her matric and intermediate examinations.

Her hard work and dedication to her studies were recognised through USAID Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program, which awarded her the opportunity to pursue a bachelor's degree in Economics. Kinza's determination and commitment to her studies resulted in her earning the degree.

Currently, Kinza is working as a teacher, sharing her knowledge and passion for learning with others. But her journey towards self-improvement and excellence is far from an end. Her future plans include obtaining a master's degree in Mathematics and further expand her expertise and skill set.

Section 7: HEC PSDP-Funded Scholarship Opportunities in Leading Pakistani HEIs for International Students (Sri Lankan and Afghan Nationals)

➢ Pak-Sri Lanka Higher Education Cooperation Programme

The project worth Rs. 2.287 billion was approved by CDWP in March 2018 with an objective to promote bilateral academic and professional relations through scholarships and exchange initiatives between the two friendly countries. The execution period of the project is nine years.

Features	Description
Scholarships for Sri Lankan Students	800 fully-funded Scholarships and 200 partially-funded scholarships for Sri Lankan students at under/postgraduate and PhD levels 436 scholars are currently studying. 24 have graduated.
Faculty Exchange	Exchange visits of 50 Sri Lankan/Pakistani faculty members to Pakistani/Sri Lankan universities to participate in research seminars, conferences, and other academic and research activities Applications have been called for the first batch of this exchange programme.
Higher Education Expo	Organising five Pakistan's Educational Expos in Sri Lanka by inviting Pakistani HEIs to introduce themselves in Sri Lanka and provide information/facilitation to Sri Lankan students regarding admission in Pakistan's universities on a self-finance basis Four out of five expos have been conducted by HEC.
Training of Sri Lankan Government Officers	Short training for 50 Sri Lankan officers in the public administration, governance, and leadership to be organised in Pakistan. Target is achieved. 50 trainings have been conducted by HEC.
Establishment of Centre of Asian Civilisations and Cultures in a Sri Lankan University	A research centre to promote the Asian civilisations, cultures, humanities, history, arts and architecture, heritage conservation, inter-faith harmony, religious tourism, the teachings of Buddha, the teachings of Gandhara civilisation and humanistic Buddhism and to provide local and international students and researchers to carry out research in the above areas. Negotiation with the University of Peradeniya Sri Lanka is in process for establishment of this centre.

Pak-Sri Lanka Higher Education Cooperation Programme					
A. Annual breakdown of 800 Fully-Funded Scholarships					
Undergraduate	**Degree Programme**	**Scholarships**	**Annual Intake as per PC-1**	**Intake on ground till date**	Total fully funded scholarships awarded: 407
	Medicine (MBBS)	100	20	78	
	Engineering	150	30	83	
	General	350	70	208	
Postgraduate	All Disciplines	150	30	31	
Doctoral	All Disciplines	50	10	7	
Total		800	160	407	
B. Annual breakdown of 200 Partially Funded Scholarships					
Undergraduate	Medicine	20	5	11	Total Partially Funded Scholarships awarded: 29
	Engineering	40	10	5	
	General	80	20	13	
Postgraduate	All Disciplines	30	8	0	
Doctoral	All Disciplines	30	7	0	
Total		200	50	29	
Total Scholarships Awarded (A+B) = 436					

	Graduated	**Onboard**
Total Availed / Joined University	24	436

Programme	**Number of Scholars**
BS	398
MS	31
PhD	7
Total	**436**

Success Stories



Ms. Ramesha Rathnayaka's on Multidimensional International Exposure: was awarded with the Allama Iqbal scholarship in 2020. It turned out to be a great opportunity for her to fulfill her future goals. So, with a million dreams, she had stepped in through the gate of the University of the Punjab. Doing an MPhil degree was a 'unique self-improving and self-motivating experience'. So, she completed her MPhil in Mass Communication in 2022. In that duration of two years, she faced a lot of challenges. But it, according to her, proved to be a great journey with HEC and the University of the Punjab. She believes that it was a tremendous life experience for her.

Besides the learning experience in the university premises, she had a great cultural and social experience in Pakistan. She also believes that there were many aspects of Pakistan's uniqueness she experienced, and her experience in Pakistan made her believe that cultural experience was far superior. She misses hospitable behaviour, friendly smiles on faces as always, the poetic Urdu language, meetups with friends, colorful cultural festivals, and amazing Pakistani foods.

She also acquired ample practical experience. By profession, she is a lecturer and the guidance she got is still helping her in life.



Mr. Rizki Haleemdeen: hailing from Gelioya, Sri Lanka, was awarded Allama Muhammad Iqbal Scholarship in 2020. Moving to Pakistan exposed him to challenges being a person with no prior experience of living away from home. He felt the transition daunting, especially in the absence of fellow Sri Lankan seniors. However, he admitted that the remarkable environment and the wonderful people whom he encountered in Pakistan swiftly made him feel at home.

In January 2023, he proudly graduated with an MSc in Data Science. His time in Pakistan has been very memorable, and he is forever grateful to HEC Pakistan for its support and the opportunity it provided to pursue his higher studies. Now back in Sri Lanka, he takes immense pride in being an 'ambassador of Pakistan'.

Currently, he is working as a Machine Learning Developer at The Producers, Inc., a US-based company. He is excited to continue making meaningful contributions to the field of Machine Learning.

➢ Award of 3000 Scholarship to Students from Afghanistan under Prime Minister's Directive (Phase-I)

The Government of Pakistan has initiated different programmes under the "Committee for Reconstruction & Rehabilitation of Afghanistan (CRRA)." One of the programmes launched under this initiative included the Award of 1000 scholarships to Afghan students for undergraduate studies in Pakistani universities in 2009. In 2010, the scholarships were increased to 2000. Later, the programme was transferred to HEC with all responsibilities. The total expenditure of the programme before transfer to HEC was Rs. 2.5 billion.

Afterwards, the project entitled Award of 3000 Scholarships to Students from Afghanistan was approved in the ECNEC meeting held in September 2015 at a capital cost of Rs. 4201.160 million without FEC where administrative approval was also issued alongside with a duration of 72 months.

Phase I Awarded		**Overall Progress**		**Progress FY 2023-24**		
		Complet-ed	Awarded	Enrolled/ Onboard	Completed	
1	Undergraduate level	2912	2912	Successfully Completed		
2	Post Graduate Level	40	40			
	Phase II					
1	Undergraduate level	2400	860	0	1540	200
2	Postgraduate Level	600	90	0	510	50
	Phase-III					
1	Undergraduate level	3600		250	250	0
2	Postgraduate Level	900		100	100	0
Total		**10,452**	**3902**	**350**	**2400**	**250**

- In the academic year 2024, placement of 250 Afghan students for under-graduate programme and 100 students for postgraduate programne has been finalised.
- Liaison with different universities is ensured for quality learning experience for Afghan students.
- HEC launched a welcome ceremony at NUTECH University Islamabad for new Afghan students.
- Arrangement was made for zero semester for undergraduate students in two Pakistani universities.

➢ Allama Muhammad Iqbal Scholarships for Afghan Nationals (Phase-II)

After the success of Phase I, the Government of Pakistan launched the Phase II of the project. ECNEC approved Phase II of 3000 scholarships in 2018 under the project entitled Allama Muhammad Iqbal scholarships for Afghan Nationals worth Rs 7.3 billion.

- In the academic year 2024, as many as 200 undergraduate students and 50 postgraduate completed their degrees.
- Arrangement was made for different events to highlight the social impact of the initiative.
- HEC played a proactive role in universities to create goodwill among the Afghan students and it resolves operational issues of the students.

➢ HEC PSDP-Funded Project "Allama Muhhammad Iqbal Scholarships for Afghan Nationals (Phase-III)"

After physical targets of Phase II were achieved, the Government of Pakistan launched Phase III of Allama Muhammad Iqbal scholarships for Afghan Nationals worth Rs. 12.7 billion with an increase in the number of scholarships to 4500 under the project entitled
.

- To create Pakistan's goodwill among the people of Afghanistan
- To promote Human Resource Development for the reconstruction of Afghanistan
- To develop people-to-people contacts between the two neighbouring countries
- To establish linkages between the educational institutions of both countries.

Section 8: Collaborative Research Support Programmes Funded by HEC/PSDP

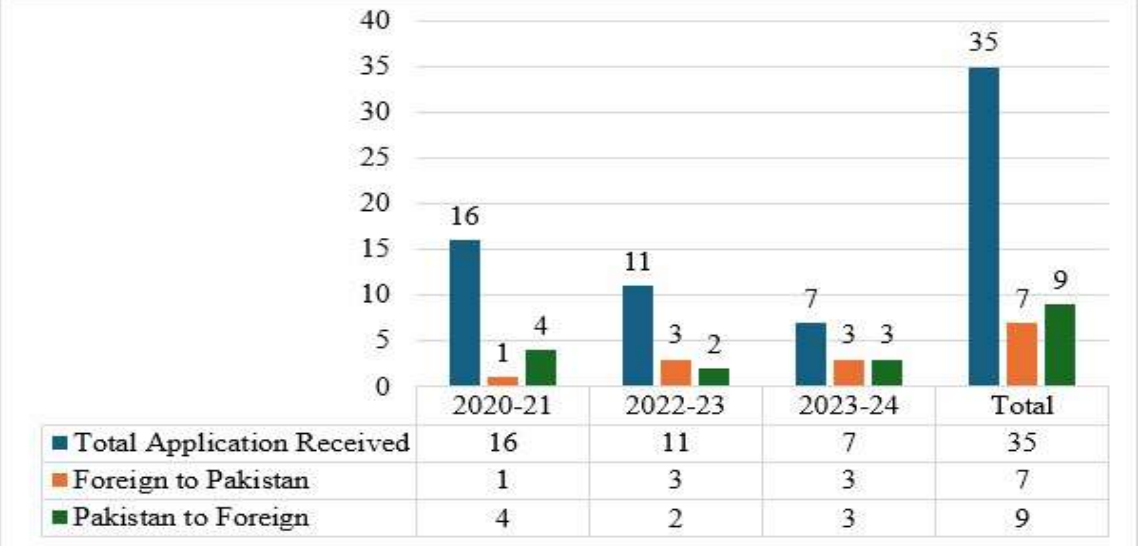
➢ Faculty Exchange Programme

The Faculty Exchange Programme is designed to enhance teaching and research collaboration of Pakistani institutions and faculty with partner institutions around the world. The programme allows Pakistani faculty to go abroad and foreign faculty from technological advanced countries to visit Pakistan. The programme is open to all disciplines and is accessible to HEC-recognised public sector universities/degree awarding institutions. Emphasis is placed on purposeful exchange with defined activities and tangible outcomes. Institutional arrangement with international organisations such as USEFP, DAAD, British Council and others will be encouraged.

The programme is open to the following:

1. HEC-recognised public sector universities/degree awarding institutions can invite foreign faculty and send their faculty abroad. Preferably this faculty exchange may take place with the members from those institutions/HEIs with whom HEC has already signed agreements and placed Pakistani students for PhD studies.
2. Foreign faculty members from technologically advanced countries, preferably from top 200 ranked universities or top 500 universities subject wise can be invited.

A total of six PhD faculty members have applied under the said programme. The selection of the candidates is under process.



	2020-21	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Total Application Received	16	11	7	35
Foreign to Pakistan	1	3	3	7
Pakistan to Foreign	4	2	3	9

➢ HEC PSDP/Donor Funded (British Council) Project Entitled "Pak-UK Education Gateway: International Faculty Mobility"

The project entitled Pak-UK Education Gateway is a joint venture between the British Council and HEC. The British Council has committed an amount of Rs. 900.042 million whereas HEC will contribute Rs. 1072.36 million. The activities are funded on a matching grant basis by both partner agencies. Key areas of collaboration under this umbrella are:

"Innovative and collaborative research, higher education leadership improvement, quality assurance and standard setting, distance learning, international mobility and transnational education".



HEC and British Council Pakistan have recently advertised invitation for full proposals from UK and Pakistani universities for this partnership. Based on the defined terms and conditions, eight proposals have been approved. The details of the targets achieved, and the progress made are given below.

Description	Provision in PC-I	Actual Achievement
Exchange of Faculty Visit UK to Pakistan	63	60
Exchange of Faculty Visit Pakistan to UK	63	69

The details of the visit plan of selected joint Faculty Mobility proposals are mentioned below.

Applicants	Pakistani University	UK University	Mobility from Pak-UK	Nominated Member	Mobility from UK to PAK
135	COMSATS University Islamabad, Wah Campus	Edge Hill University	14 October to 26 October 2023	HEC	1 August to 10 August 2023
25	NED University of Engineering and Technology	University of the West Scotland	23 September to 06 October 2023	HEC	13 October to 26 October

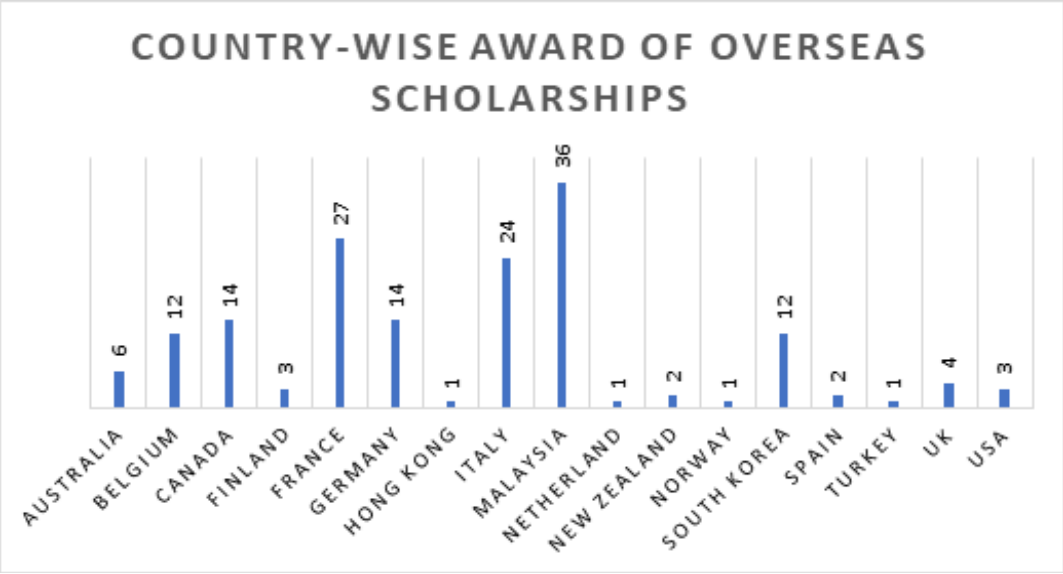
15	National University of Science and Technology, Ghulam Ishaq khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology, COMSATS University, NED University of Science and Technology, University of Okara, and University of Karachi	Cranfield	25 September to 29 September 2023	HEC	21 August to 29 August 2023
137	National University of Science and Technology, Islamabad	Coventry University	12 August to 27 August 2023	British Council	20 November to 1 December 2023
144	The Islamia University of Bahawalpur	Queen Mary University of London (QMUL)	June 04-June 14, 2024	British Council	April 29, 2024, to May 10, 2024
105	International Islamic University, Islamabad	King's College London	Cohort I, 4 to 8 September 2023, Cohort II, 22 to 28 September 2023	HEC	January 07 to January 11, 2024
41	Government College University, Faisalabad	London South Bank University	21 August to 4 September 2023	British Council	15 September to 30 September 2023
79	Institute of Management Sciences (IMS), Peshawar	University of Hull, UK	6 October to 16 October 2023	HEC	16 September to 24 September 2023

Section 9: Special Initiatives by HEC, Government of Pakistan for Students of Less Developed Areas through HEC/PSDP

➢ PSDP Funded Project Entitled: "Master's to PhD Scholarship Programme (Indigenous and Overseas) for the Students of Balochistan (An Initiative of the Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan)"

The project has been launched to provide academic opportunities to the youth of Balochistan who despite having capabilities are unable to pursue higher studies due to financial constraints. The project worth Rs.3, 138.692 million was approved by ECNEC in November 2011 to award 600 (200 Overseas and 400 Indigenous) MS/MPhil leading to PhD scholarships, while the administrative approval was issued in September 2012. Under the project, the first batch was sent in 2014-15.

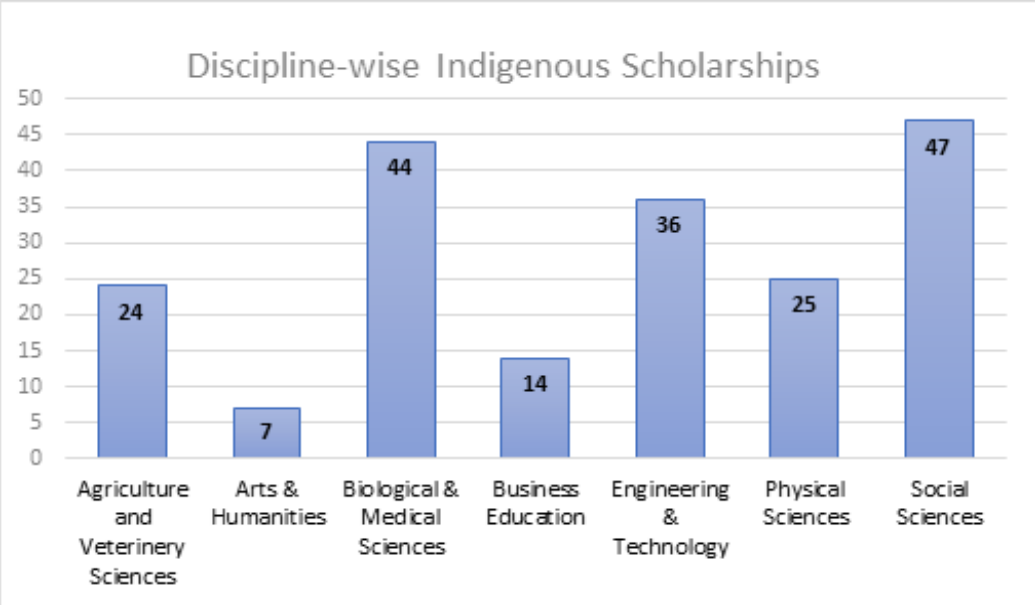
Under the overseas scholarship category, 163 scholars have been sent abroad to complete their studies. So far, 76 scholars have completed their studies successfully and rest are pursuing.



Progress FY 2023-24 (Overseas Scholarships)	
Degree Completed	25

Indigenous Scholarships

Under the indigenous scholarship category, a total of 761 applicants were offered the scholarship while 205 scholars availed the scholarship and joined their studies. So far 71 scholars have completed their studies successfully.



Progress FY 2023-24 (Indigenous Scholarships)	
Degree Completed	37

During the year 2023-24, no new scholarships were awarded, however another 37scholars completed their respective degree programmes.

Success Stories



Dr. Aziza Sarwar hails from the Pishin District of Balochistan. After completing her MS, she decided to continue PhD and got selected and availed HEC scholarship "Aghaz e Haqooq Baluchistan AHBP". Going for PhD alone with three kids was the hardest decision of her life but as the saying goes where there is a will there is a way, she continued her PhD in University of Malaya, Malaysia with three kids aged 7, 6 and 2 years.

She received her PhD Degree from University Malaya (Malaysia) from Chemistry Department, Faculty of Science, in November 2021 and her research title was "Synthesis, Luminescence and Antibacterial Studies of Binuclear Zn (II) And Ir (III) Azomethine Complexes". During her PhD journey she published research articles in reputed journals. Higher studies and exposure abroad augmented her expertise in the field of Coordination/ Inorganic Chemistry with a firm grip on synthesis as well as various applications of coordination complexes.

She joined BUITEMS (her parent organization) after returning to Pakistan. She is currently serving as Assistant Professor.



Dr. Shazia Baloch was born in a very back word area of Balochistan. Her hometown is Mashkia district Awaran. Her father was a superintended in DC Office Khuzdar and her mother is a housewife who used to be very supportive throughout her journey.

In 2016, she found out about the advertisement of HEC scholarships under the package of Aghaz-e-Haqooq Balochistan and applied for masters leading to PhD scholarship. She passed the test and got selected for an Overseas scholarship. She got admission in PhD programme at Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea and proceeded to South Korea and joined University in March 2017.

She did her Ph.D. in Electrical and Electronic Engineering specializing in microgrid protection. Her thesis title is "Fault Protection Strategy for Microgrid using Signal Processing Technique with Data Mining Classifier". She has published 10 journal articles and attended seven international conferences.

Currently she is working as the Head of Department in the Electronic Engineering Department at Balochistan University of Engineering and Technology, Khuzdar.

➢ Provision of Higher Education Opportunities to the Students of Balochistan & FATA (Phase-II

The project entitled "Provision of Higher Education Opportunities for Students of Balochistan & Erstwhile FATA (Phase-I)" worth Rs. 2,983.698 million was approved by CDWP in its meeting held in October 2015, with an implementation period of 96 months.

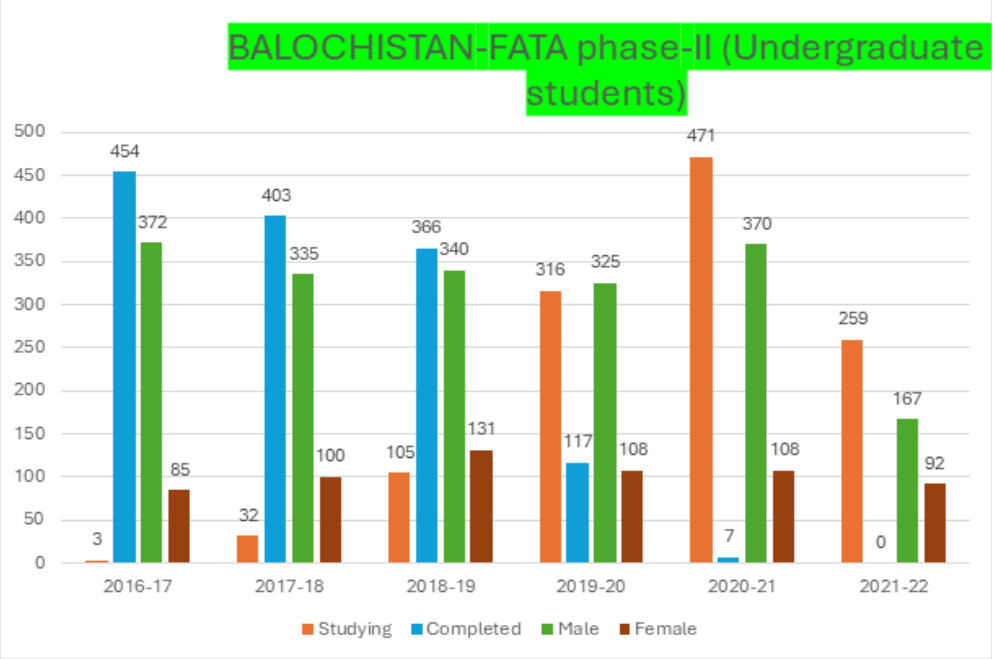
The main objective of the project is to provide scholarships for BS and MS studies for the students from Balochistan and erstwhile FATA in educational institutions of other provinces. This promotes the regional balance while helping youth from less developed areas in acquisition of quality higher education from any/all federating units of Pakistan.

The project envisaged to award scholarships, in all fields of studies at undergraduate and postgraduate levels to students having domicile/local certificate of Balochistan and erstwhile FATA. Quantitative target of the scholarship programme was to provide 3,900 scholarships with an equal distribution of 50% seats each to the students of Balochistan (1950 slots) and erstwhile FATA (1950 slots) as under:

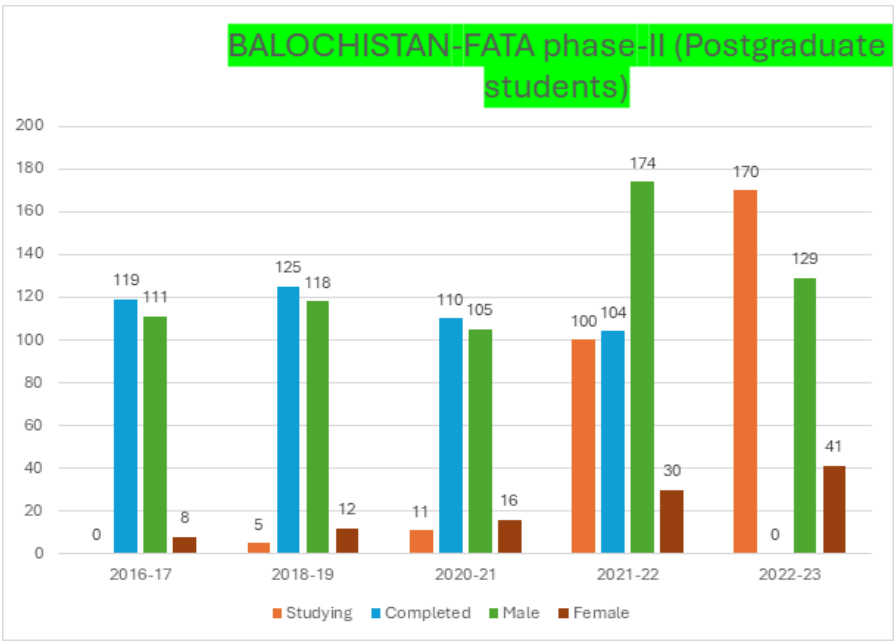
- Provision of financial support through 2500 undergraduate scholarships (BS programme 4-5 years) in five batches to students from Balochistan (1250 slots) and Erstwhile FATA (1250 slots) with equal distribution of 50:50 ratio.
- 1400 Postgraduate Scholarships (Master's/MS-2 years) for students from Balochistan (700 slots) and FATA (700 slots) at the ratio of 50:50 with yearly intake of 200 slots.

The physical progress and achievements of Undergraduate and Postgraduate scholarship programme is as under respectively.

SN	Batch	Onboard	Completed	Balochistan (1313)		FATA (1219)	
				Male	Female	Male	Female
1	I	3	454	177	69	195	16
2	II	32	403	149	81	186	19
3	III	105	366	144	100	196	31
4	IV	316	117	148	79	177	28
5	V	471	7	154	84	216	24
6	VI	259	0	55	73	112	19
Total		**1186**	**1347**	**827**	**486**	**1082**	**137**



SN	Batch	Onboard	Completed	Balochistan		FATA	
				Male	Female	Male	Female
1	I	0	119	38	3	73	5
2	II	5	125	57	9	61	3
3	III	11	110	43	11	62	5
4	IV	100	104	75	26	99	4
5	V	170	0	64	36	65	5
Total		**286**	**458**	**277**	**85**	**360**	**22**

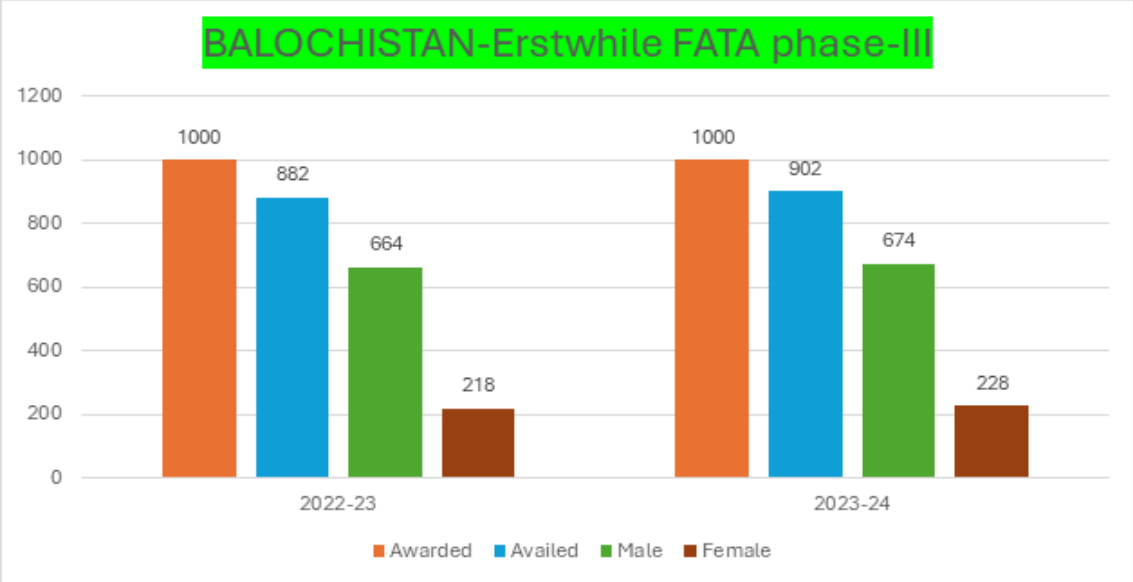


➢ Provision of Higher Education Opportunities for the Students of Balochistan & Erstwhile FATA (Phase-III)

After the successful implementation of phase-I and II of both projects by HEC, ECNEC/ Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan approved Phase-III of the project in January 2023 with a capital cost of Rs.8,663.350 million. Under this scholarship programme 5,000 undergraduate scholarships in five batches (Annual intake 1,000) are to be awarded. The distribution ratio of scholarships among Balochistan and erstwhile FATA is 50:50.

The project aims to provide enhanced access to higher education to improve the socio-economic conditions in the target areas. Furthermore, the project will provide learning opportunities and professional development to the youth, resulting in better employment opportunities, hence contributing to the overall national and regional economy. Two batches of the scholarship programme have been announced, while three batches are in the pipeline. The physical progress and achievement of the project is displayed as below.

SN	Batch	Awarded	Availed (Balochistan)	Availed (Erstwhile FATA)	Male	Female	Availed (Total)
1	I (2022-23)	1000	479	403	664	218	882
2	II (2023-24)	1000	468	434	674	228	902



Success Stories



Dr. Zara Arshad (Physician) hails from Quetta, Balochistan, and became an HEC scholar in 2017. A dedicated physician, she has actively contributed to the medical field through her commitment to research and professional excellence.

She began her research journey at Bolan Medical College, where she founded the Bolanian Research Forum, assisting her colleagues in designing research studies early in her career. Currently, she is a practicing primary health doctor in Islamabad and works as a research faculty with the Global Remote Research Scholars Programme (GRRSP), guiding medical professionals in developing their research careers.

In recognition of her contributions, she was named among 25 under 25 Women of Pakistan in 2022 by The Little Art Organization (backed by Australian High Commission) and was recently honored as an Emerging Physician by the Pakistan Society of Internal Medicine for her research.



Dr. Hadiqa Gul (House Officer) Hayatabad Medical Complex (HMC) Peshawar belongs to an underprivileged area of District Mohmand, Pakistan. She aspires to continue her career and wants to get fellowship from the USA. She said, her career aspiration has come true. She is the first female doctor from her area and is very thankful to HEC for financial support. She is grateful to the supportive staff of Balochistan and Erstwhile FATA project. She asserted the fact that the financial assistance for the students of Balochistan and Erstwhile FATA should be continued as it helps a lot in materializing the dreams of the talented students from Balochistan & FATA.

➢ Undergraduate Scholarship Programme for Students of Gil-git-Baltistan in Top Pakistani Universities/Institutions

The Government of Pakistan through HEC is committed to expanding higher education scholarship opportunities for the less-developed areas of the country. The project was approved by DDWP in April 2021 to award 335 undergraduate scholarships at a total cost of Rs. 648.676 million. These scholarships were to be awarded for undergraduate students BS programme (4-5 years) in the HEC-recognized public sector universities of Pakistan.

Since the project's inception, a total of 275 scholarships have been awarded. Out of these awardees, 243 students have availed this scholarship. The progress during the year 2023-24 is tabulated as under:

Progress FY 2023-24		
Degree Programme	**Awarded**	**Availed/Studying**
Undergraduate	106	106

These scholars are enrolled in different disciplines in public sector universities of Pakistan.

➢ HEC Scholarships for the Students of Gwadar (Chinese Language & Undergraduate Studies)

The project worth Rs. 143.861 million was initiated in March 2017 to uplift academic standards in the remote area of Gwadar. Initially the project was approved (for Punjab) including FEC of Rs. 83.728 million by CDWP held in July 2017 which was further increased to Rs. 165.113 million in July 2022 for all Pakistan's universities.

The objective of the programme is to produce educated, skilled and well-trained youth in Gwadar for the emerging job opportunities being created through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The programme has following two components:

- 50 scholarships for Chinese Language in China
- 50 scholarships for undergraduate programme (four years)

All the 50 scholars have completed Chinese Language course from China (14 from Literature Jiang Su University China and 36 from Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology, China).

Total 43 students have been awarded scholarships, in four batches, for undergraduate studies (BS four years) in selected academic programmes/disciplines which are being taught in Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa universities/institutions.

Overall Progress of the Project			
Degree Programme	**Awarded**	**Completed**	**Onboard**
Undergraduate	43	26	17
Language Course	50	50	0
Total	**93**	**76**	**17**

➢ Coastal Region Higher Education Scholarships for Under-graduate Programme for Balochistan

The project was conceived under the Southern Balochistan Development Package approved by the Government of Pakistan. The project was approved by DDWP in March 2021 with a capital cost of Rs. 385.437 million to offer fully-funded undergraduate scholarships in all disciplines to 200 students (in four batches) belonging to Gwadar, Lasbela/Hub, Kech (Turbat) and Awaran districts of Balochistan.

The core objective of the scholarship programme is to reduce the sense of deprivation among the youth of local communities of the region by providing them higher education opportunities in the HEC-recognised universities of Pakistan. The project was included in PSDP FY 2022-23. The detail of scholarships awarded and onboard is as under:

District	No of Scholarships (Each Batch)	Onboard
Gwadar	20	13
Lasbela	10	6
Kech (Turbat)	10	6
Awaran	10	5
Total	**50**	**30**

➢ Law Graduate Scholarships Programme for Balochistan for Study Abroad

The project entitled Law Graduates Scholarships Programme for Balochistan for Study Abroad worth Rs. 420.980 million was approved by the Government of Pakistan in September 2018 to award a total of 100 scholarships (60 indigenous and 40 foreign) in batches, over the period of 96 months. The concept of the project is based on the provision of higher education opportunities to law students from Balochistan by enrolling them in national and international higher learning institutions by supporting them financially.

Under the project, the disciplines of law in which scholarships are being offered are given as under:

SN	Programme	Number
1	Indigenous LLB (Hons.)	50
2	Indigenous LLM	10
3	Foreign LLM Scholarships (01-02 Years)	30
4	Foreign Ph.D. in Law	10
	Total	**100**

So far, 66 scholarships have been awarded, out of which 33 scholars have completed their studies whereas, 33 are on board. Programme-wise details are as follows:

Scholarships	Awarded	Onboard	Completed
Local LLB	50	25	25
Local LLM	3	2	1
Foreign LLM	10	3	7
Foreign Ph.D.	3	3	0
Total	**66**	**33**	**33**

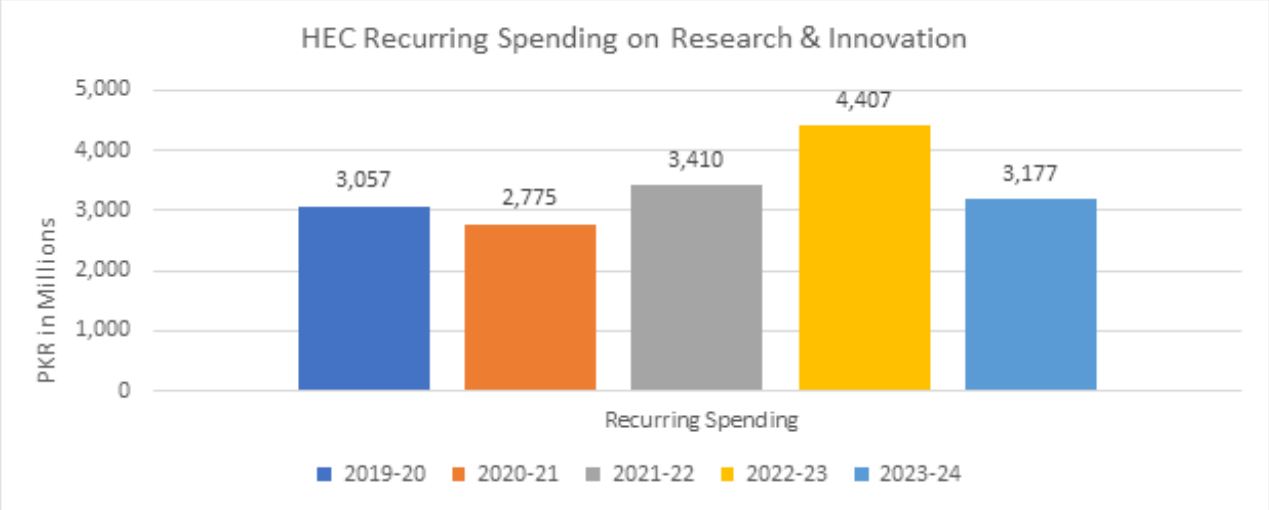
13 selected scholars have been provisionally selected. Details are as mentioned below:

Scholarships	Awarded
Local LLM	2
Foreign LLM	6
Foreign PhD	5
Total	**13**

Research & Innovation
Division

Introduction

Higher Education Commission (HEC) aims to transform research and innovation ecosystem of the country by facilitating higher education intuitions (HEIs) in Pakistan to play their pivotal role in socio-economic development of the country and to pave the way for a knowledge-based economy. In pursuit of making HEIs the major drivers of economic growth and societal impact, the Research & Innovation (R&I) Division portfolio encompasses various key initiatives including but not limited to: National Research Programme for Universities (NRPU), Offices of Research, Innovation & Commercialisation (ORICs), Business Incubation Centres (BICs), National Digital Library Programme (NDLP), Travel Grants and Seminar Conference Grants. Moreover, R&I Division has also successfully implemented various project interventions for research and innovation including Technology Development Fund (TDF), Innovative & Collaborative Research Grants under Pak-UK Education Gateway Project, Prime Minister National Innovation Award (PMNIA) and Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP). HEC has also developed and launched Research for Innovation Portal (https://rfi.hec.gov.pk) to provide a platform for networking of various players of research, commercialisation and innovation ecosystem.



National Research Programme for Universities (NRPU)

NRPU is a flagship research programme of HEC funding, since 2003, research grants on competitive merit for high-level and promising scientific research projects that demonstrate strategic relevance and impact to local industry and society. A total of Rs.790.44 million has been spent under the programme during financial year 2023-2024.

Outcomes of Completed Research Projects under NRPU in Terms of Research Publications and Human Resource Trained (FY 2023-24)		
S.No.	**Outcomes**	**Number**
1	Number (No.) of Completed Projects	**837**
2	No. of research articles published in International Journal (Impact Factor)	**1908**
3	No. of research articles published in International Journal (Non-Impact Factor)	**181**
4	No of research articles published in National Journals (Impact Factor)	**154**
5	No of research articles published in National Journals (Non-Impact)	**186**
6	No. of MS Students Supervised	**2014**
7	No. of PhD Students Supervised	**442**

Success Stories of Research Projects under NRPU

Project No. : 10173
PI Name : Dr. Abid Ali
University : Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan
Project title : The Development of a Multi Competent Cocktail Anti-Tick Vaccine

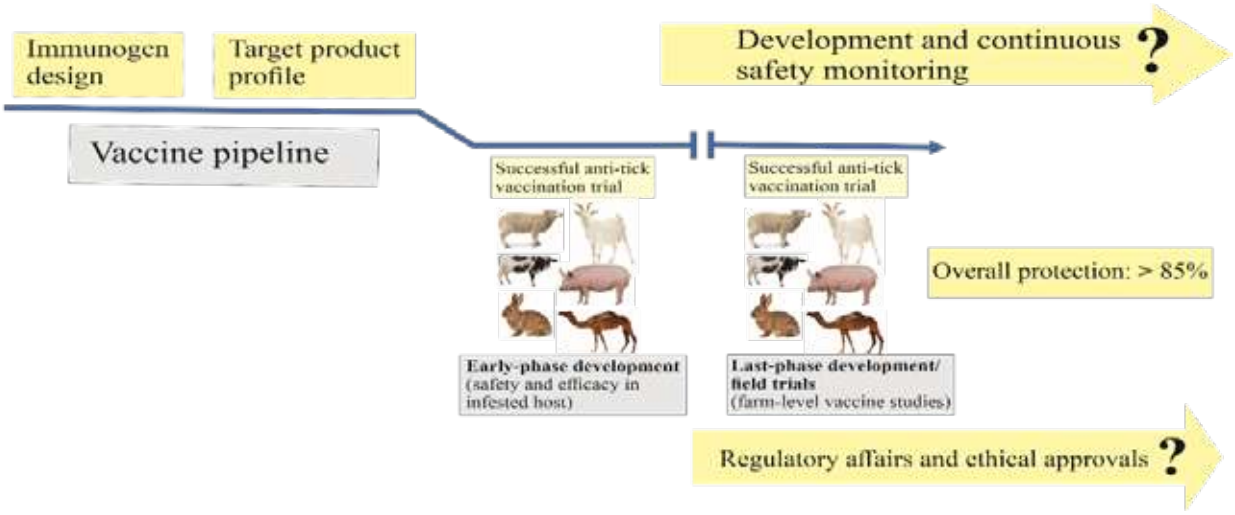
Project Brief

This study aims to test our central hypothesis and, thereby, accomplish the objective of this proposal by pursuing the specific aims using a combination of molecular, physiological, biochemical, and genetic approaches, 1) investigate and identify the T-cell epitopes of selected R. microplus antigenic proteins and thereby the development of a novel chimeric anti-tick vaccine that block tick feeding success and acquisition, survival, replication, and transmission of pathogen.

Project Outcomes

In silico analyses revealed that SUB, P0 and FER2 proteins were antigenic and displayed limited similarity to the host's homologous proteins. The proteins shared identities of 97.5%, 100% and 89.5% with their SUB, P0 and FER2 R. sanguineus s.l. orthologous sequences, respectively. Antibodies against each recombinant protein cross-recognized the native proteins in the different tissues and developmental stages of R. sanguineus s.l. Overall efficacy of the SUB, FER2 and cocktail (SUB+FER2+P0) vaccines against R. sanguineus s.l. infestation was 86.3%, 95.9% and 90.9%, respectively.

The research team produced 14 MS students with overall 32 national publications and five paper presentation in international conferences.



This project was started in 2019 and completed in 2023 with overall cost of Rs. ~ 8 millions.

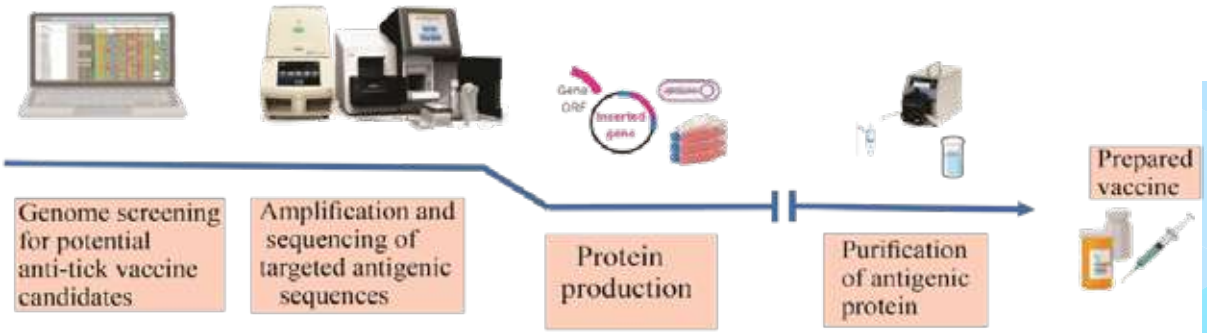


Figure 1 4th Call process glimpse

Project No. : **10427**
PI Name : **Malika Rani**
University : **The Women University Multan**
Project Title : **A Study of Magnetoresistance and Advance Universal Electro resistance Effect in Some Strongly Correlated Electron Systems**

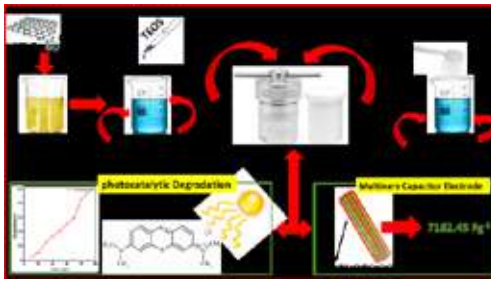
Project Brief

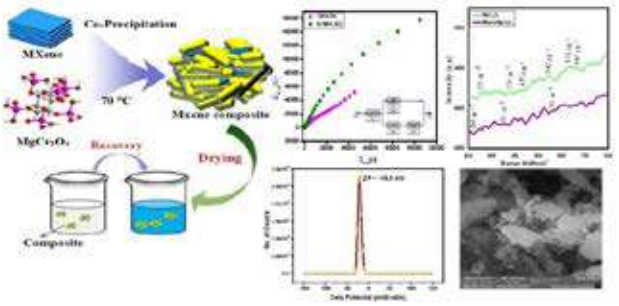
This study aims to determine the motion and position of every electron in SCES materials creating excellent functionalities which cannot be obtained with convention models. SCES introduced as an emerging field of research with which we can develop new form of electronics – beyond the narrow sense of present-day semiconductor electronics.

Project Outcomes

Strongly Correlated Electron Systems (SCES) are the widely studied area of condensed matter physics. In SCES, the properties of systems are controlled by electron-electron interaction which is very large. These interactions can create a wide ranging of

electronic properties under different conditions which embrace potential for a novel variety of electronics. The advancement of twentieth century Physics was the development of quantum theories of solids to control the behavior of electron in the solids. To explore and understand the vast class of condensed matter physics is the challenge of the twenty-first century. This project was started in 2019 and completed in 2022 with overall cost of Rs. 4.012218 million.





The research team produced seven PhD scholars and 30 MPhil scholars with a total of 50 publications in high impact journals and presented the work in 12 International conferences organized in UK, Italy, Turkey and different universities of Pakistan.

Project No. : 12084
PI Name : Dr. Nawar Khan
University : Riphah International University, Al-Mizan Campus Rawalpindi
Project title : Comparative performance analysis of ISO-certified and non-certified commercial companies of Pakistan on the basis of technical, managerial, financial and social aspects etc. to inspire other non-certified companies to adopt ISO Certification

Project Brief

Research Methodology: The research design of this project includes both qualitative and quantitative analysis of secondary data retrieved through extensive literature review and national empirical primary data collected from all chambers of commerce and industry of Pakistan of both IMS standards certified and non-certified business companies through a verified and validated survey questionnaire.

Data Collection and Analysis: The empirical primary data collected from all chambers of commerce and industry was synthesised and reviewed by the ISO focus group. A total of 13 factors (main area) with 69 elements (sub-area) having 740 frequency finalised which include; financial performance, Quality Assurance, Customers' Satisfaction, Employees' Satisfaction, Market Potential, Operational Improvement, Company Performance, Continuous Improvements, Top Management Performance, Communication, Stakeholders Relations, Environmental Improvement, and Competition. Analysis of the primary national data collected through literature and national survey was done using different software like; NVIVO, Quirkos, SPSS, and SmartPLS. Numerous tests were performed to confirm the impact of IMS standard certification on businesses' performance and a comparative performance analysis

was done of IMS standards certified businesses against the non-certified business companies.

Tests Performed:

1. CFA Level - 1 (for both IMS and Non-IMS Certified Companies),
2. Normality of Data (Skewness and Kurtosis),
3. Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha),
4. Construct Reliability and Validity,
5. Path Coefficient (Correlation),
6. HTMT,
7. Two Pair Test – Factor to Factor and Element to Element Comparison,
8. R Square,
9. Model FIT

Project Outcomes

i. Analysis of the secondary data shows that IMS standards certification has a positive impact on the businesses' performance.

ii. Also, analysis of the primary empirical data collected through national surveys confirmed the impact of IMS standards certification on businesses' performance.

iii. The comparative performance analysis of primary empirical national data proves that IMS-certified companies perform significantly better than non-certified companies.

iv. Two research papers were published, 1 paper was accepted for publication and third paper is under review and the draft of the fourth paper is in hand.

v. Two MS students trained

vi. A unique outcome of this project is the development of Pakistan National Operational Model for Businesses' Improvement, the copyright of which is under process at IPO Pakistan.

vii. The improvement in businesses' performance due to the IMS standards certification contributes to better prosperity, sustainability, operations environment, etc., thus increasing the national GDP. This performance improvement ultimately leads to the attainment of SDG goals set by the UN for all nations. viii. Written reports were also shared with all chambers of commerce and industry including FPCCI of Pakistan.

viii. A national conference was held at ICCI to share the information and results about the complete project NRPU-12084 and its outcomes.

ix. The boundary of knowledge on the impact and comparative performance analysis of IMS standards certification against non-ISO-certified companies has been raised to new heights.

Technology Development Fund

Technology Development Fund (TDF) is a PSDP-funded initiative launched in 2016, with an initial budget of Rs 2.9 billion for five years. The project's primary goal is to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technology to industry and society for the development of prototypes, products, and processes. This is the first programme designed to use academic research as a platform, offering opportunities for collaboration with industry to transform innovation and invention into revenue-generating ventures. Out of 200 awarded projects, 190 have been completed so far. Given these projects' success, extending the TDF project until June 2027 is under consideration.

The 4th call for proposals was launched in November 2022, and 495 submissions were received.

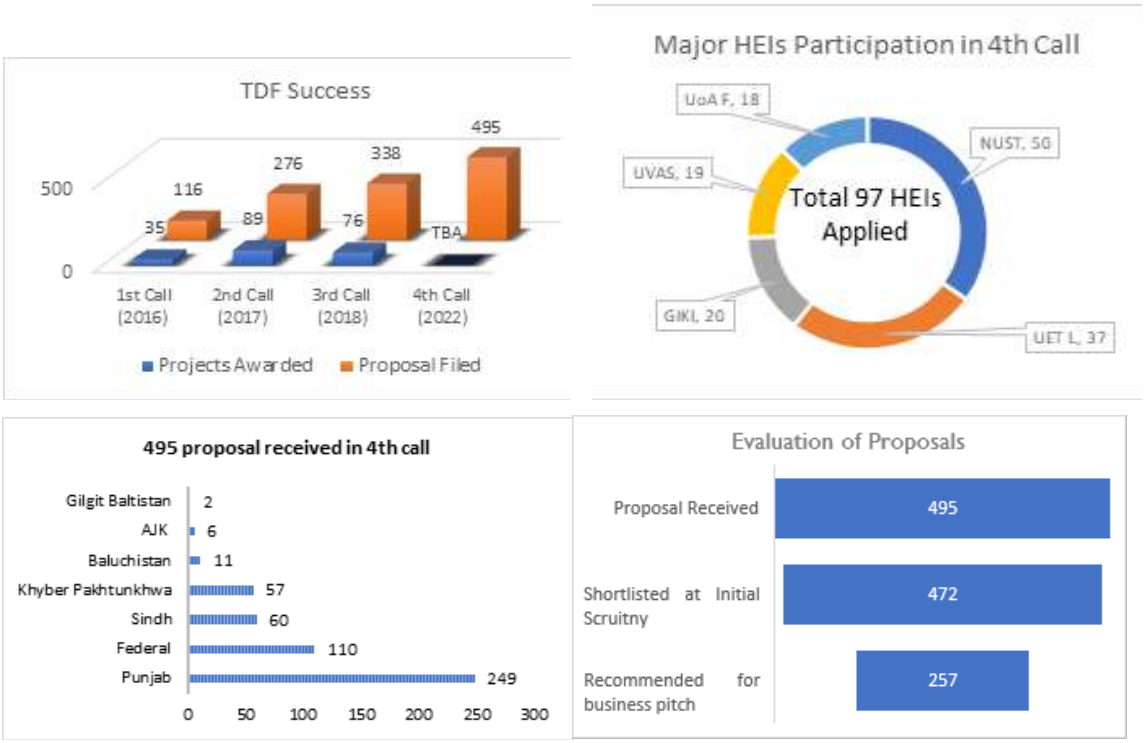


Figure 2 Project Achievements

Out of 190 completed projects, this year five more projects have started generating revenue. The number of revenue-generating projects has now reached the total count of 22 projects, where HEIs have secured Rs. 17.124 million as revenue.

Projects completed	•190 out of 200
Revenue genrated	•PKR 17.124 Mn by HEIs out of 22 projects
Prototypes/ products	•130 developed
Technology licensed	•160 licensesigned
Patents filed	•45 filed
Publications	•86 (National and International) published

Figure 2 Project Achievements

Success Stories under TDF

TDF02-113: Language Speech Interfaces for the Banking Sector of Pakistan

Principal Investigator: Dr. Tania Habib

Industry Partner: Virtual Force Pvt. Ltd.

In a breakthrough, the project team successfully developed an innovative phone banking system that operates entirely through speech commands in Urdu, revolutionizing customer service in Pakistan. The team recognised the growing demand for accessible, efficient service solutions and set out to create a system that streamlines processes while catering to local linguistic preferences.

After analysing data from local banks, the team identified card activation as the most requested service and prioritized automating it through voice commands. Customers can now easily activate their cards with a simple command, enhancing both convenience and efficiency. The system is also extendable, with features like user verification set to be added, offering even more comprehensive services in the future.

Beyond banking, this voice-enabled system holds potential for industries such as telecommunications, real estate, and manufacturing, where quick, effective customer responses are crucial. By automating interactions through speech, businesses can improve service speed and quality, leading to higher customer satisfaction.

The team is confident that this Urdu voice-enabled system will continue to transform customer service across industries, setting the stage for further innovation and success in the region.

- One publication in progress
- Rs. 1.0 million in revenue has been generated in this project

TDF03-150: Post-Mortem Aging Technology: A Way to Improve Nutritional and Sensorial Quality of Meat

Principal Investigator: Dr. Muhammad Issa Khan

Industry Partner: Anis Associate meat processing unit

Pakistan's meat industry has achieved significant advancements through the optimization of the meat aging process. With annual meat consumption rising from 7.84 kg per capita in 1960 to 16.87 kg in 2020, consumer demand has evolved to prioritize attributes like tenderness, flavour, aroma, and texture.

This two-year TDF awarded project explored the impact of aging duration and temperature on meat quality. Through carefully controlled trials, the aging process—regulating temperature, air flow, and humidity—was refined to transform muscle into tender, flavorful meat. Complex proteins and fats were broken down into simpler, more digestible forms, enhancing the meat's aroma, flavor, and texture.

Key findings showed significant improvements in water-holding capacity, cooking yield, and sensory factors like juiciness and tenderness. Biochemical changes, such as increases in amino acid content and protein solubility, further contributed to the superior quality of aged meat.

The outcome of this project is a game changer for Pakistan's meat industry. The optimised aging process not only improves meat quality but also reduces spoilage and extends shelf life. This opens up new opportunities for meat exports, offering high profitability and boosting the nation's economy.

- One patent in progress.
- Rs. 0.5 million in revenue has been generated in this project.



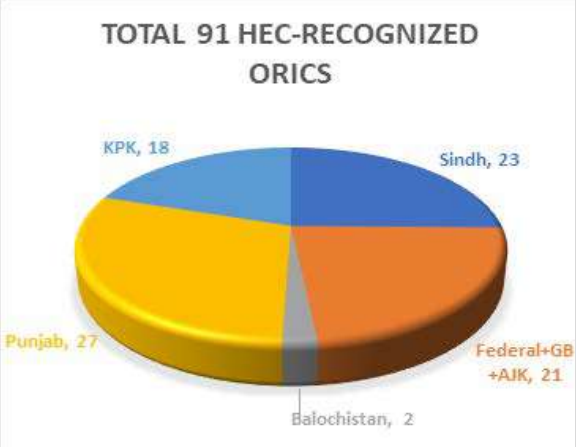
Establishment of Office of Research, Innovation & Commercialisation (ORICs)

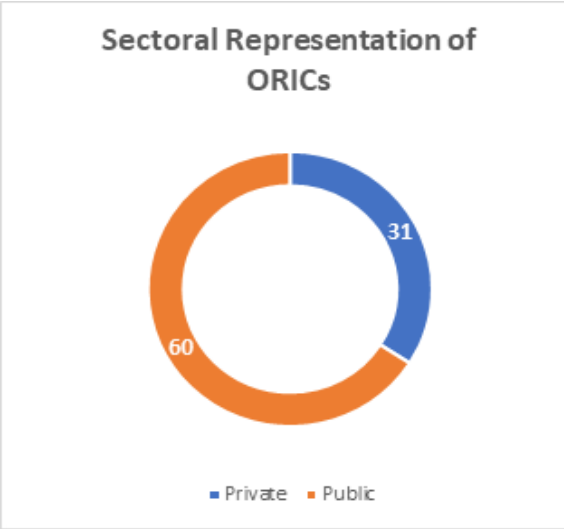
HEC introduced Offices of Research, Innovation and Commercialisation (ORICs) in universities to enhance the quality and relevance of research, promote innovation, and further the collaborative aspects in commercialisation with the industrial sector. ORICs essentially serve as one-stop offices that facilitate research through strategic planning, streamlining internal processes, establishing and monitoring standards, mobilizing resources, publicizing achievements, identifying synergies with external partners.

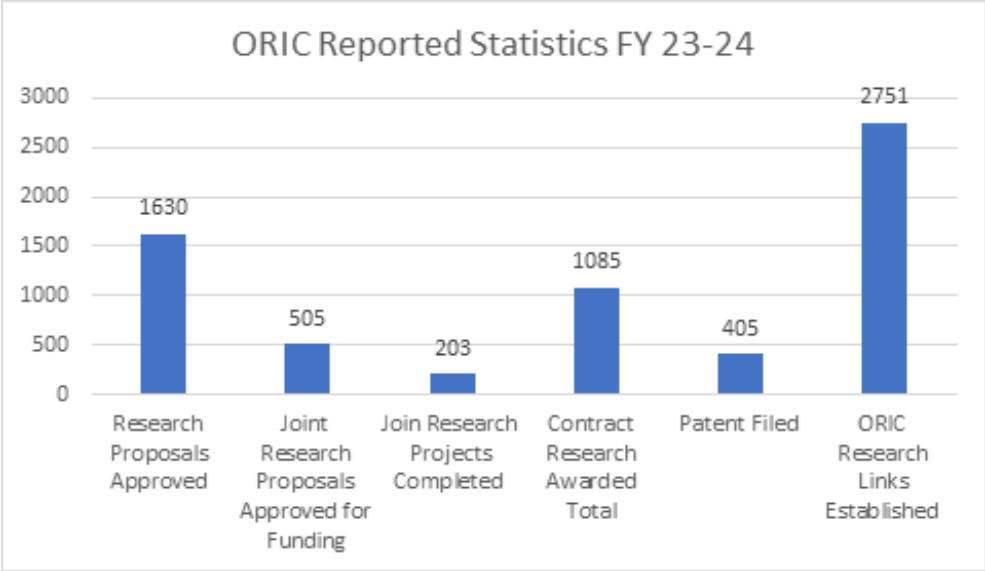
HEC provides minimum operating standards through its ORIC Policy 2021 that recognised ORICs must demonstrate compliance with. Furthermore, universities in compliance with the ORIC Policy are eligible for recognition by HEC, through which they can avail overhead performance funding against HEC-sponsored research grants and participate in different capacity building initiatives.

HEC has recognised six ORICs during FY 2023-2024, increasing the total number of registered ORICs from 85 to 91 during this year.

ORICs Recognised during FY 2023 - 2024	
National University of Technology	**Bacha Khan University Charsadda**
Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur	**Hamdard University**
Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology	**Capital University of Science and Technology**







*Self-assessment scorecards for FY 2023-2024 are currently being collected from ORICs and shall be subject to review for evaluation.

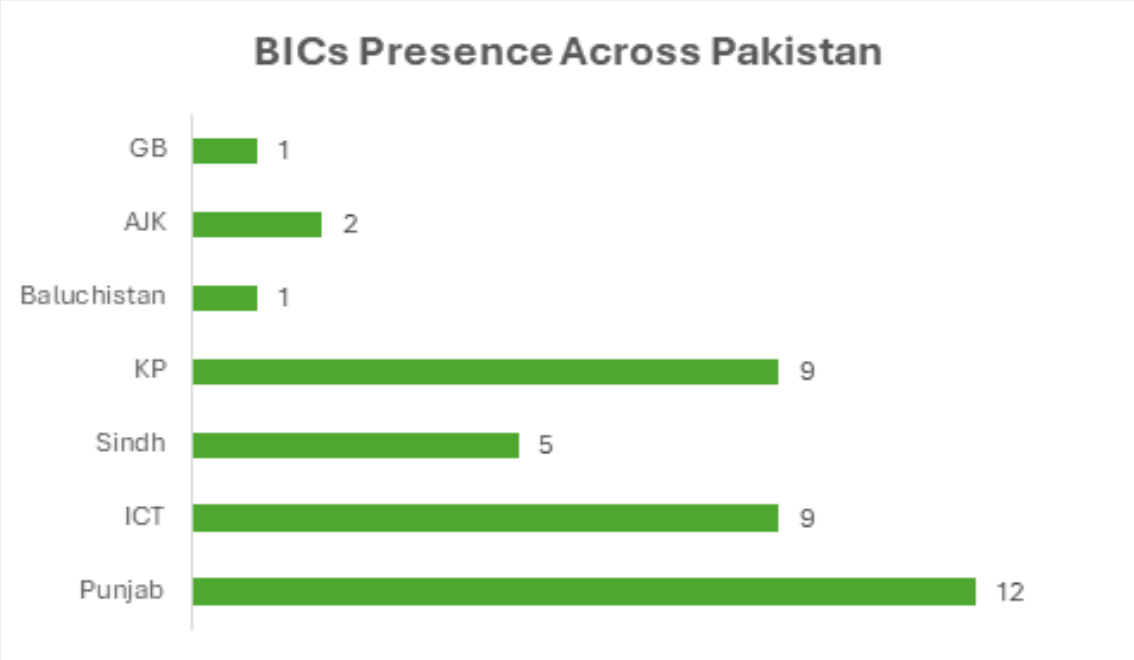
Business Incubation Centres

HEC actively promotes the establishment of Business Incubation Centres (BICs) in HEIs across Pakistan. These centres are designed to offer state-of-the-art infrastructure and essential resources to researchers and young entrepreneurs, enabling them to develop and scale early-stage business ventures. The primary objective of a business incubator is to nurture startups until they become financially sustainable and capable of operating independently.

During the FY 2023-24, HEC, through its annual call for Establishment of Business Incubation Centres (BICs), received 10 proposals from interested public sector HEIs for establishment of BIC at their campuses. Of these, four proposals were shortlisted based upon the minimum eligibility criteria. HEC notified the establishment of BIC at University of Sargodha in FY 2023-24 against approved funding of Rs. 44.23 million out of which HEC's share is Rs. 23.98 million. The remaining shortlisted proposals for establishment of BIC are under further scrutiny.

Total Number of BICs Established So Far	39
BICs Established in FY 2023-24	01
Total Approved Funding for BICs in FY 2023-24	Rs. 24m
Funding Released for New BICs in FY 2023-24	Rs. 15.44m

The overall presence of BICs across Pakistan in different public sector HEIs of Pakistan is as follows:



During the FY 2023-24, HEC also published the annual progress report for FY 2022-23[1] of BICs against Self-Assessment Scorecards, the key highlights are hereunder:

Number of BICs Evaluated Against Self-Assessment Scorecard	26
Number of BICs in "W-Top Performing" Category	08
Number of BICs in "X-Satisfactory Performing" Category	07

Research & Innovation Grants under Higher Education Development in Pakistan

Under the Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project, launched in 2019 with support of World Bank (WB), HEC has revamped the research grant framework to promote relevant and cutting-edge research in universities in Pakistan, with a focus on specific strategic sectors for the country's socioeconomic progress.

Details of spending during 2022-23 and the WB targets as % of outcomes of ongoing research projects under various HEDP research funding opportunities are as follow:

1 The annual progress report for FY 2023-24 is currently under validation with HEC and it will be published by December 2024.

Initiative Name- Total Ongoing Projects	Projects Awarded	WB Targets - as % of projects out-comes	Total Ap-proved Cost PKR in Million	Utilization 2022-23 PKR in Mil-lion
Grand Challenge Fund- 19	5 projects (2021)	60% – Achieved	1837	131
	14 projects (2022)	30% – Achieved		
Local Challenge Fund- 29	15 projects (2021)	80% – Achieved	723	120
	14 projects (2022)	60% – Achieved		
Tech. Transfer Support Fund- 25	17 projects (2021)	80% – Achieved	239	74
	8 projects (2022)	30% Achieved		
Centre of Excel-lence Grants - 6	6 projects (2022)	30% – Achieved	414	71
		Total	**3323**	**396**

GCF – 770: Can we improve outcomes in people with TB and co-morbid diabetes by offering a TB-Diabetes care package as part of TB care?

The project aims to address the health challenges faced by people with TB and type-2 diabetes in Pakistan by integrating diabetes care within TB treatment to improve health outcomes, quality of life, and economic prospects for this vulnerable population. The project's objectives include designing a specialised care package for TB-Diabetes, piloting its implementation in various settings, and evaluating its impact on Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation, and Maintenance. The project well aligns itself with global health targets, including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and contributes significantly to strengthening health systems and reducing the burden of both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

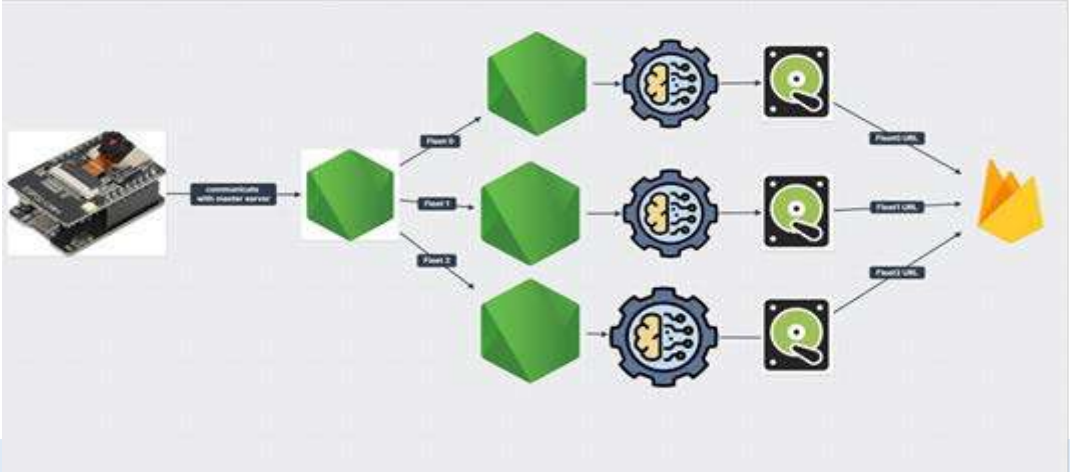
Micro-level Impact: By improving prevention, early diagnosis, and management, the project is striving to enhance the clinical outcomes and quality of life for over 200,000 individuals annually in Pakistan suffering from TB, diabetes, and pre-diabetes.

Meso-level Impact: At the organisational and community level, the project is strengthening integrated care programmes, impacting health systems in Pakistan. This could serve as a model for similar programmes globally, contributing to the enhancement of health systems.

Macro-level Impact: By contributing to several SDGs, the project seeks broader socioeconomic welfare by addressing TB-diabetes comorbidity, health inequalities, and reducing poverty among vulnerable populations in Pakistan. The implementation and findings from this project are supporting the development and implementation of health policies, healthcare financing, and resource allocation at a national and global scale, and advancing efforts toward achieving universal health coverage. Moreover, the National TB Control Programme and Provincial TB Control Programmes of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have committed to integrating TB-diabetes care within routine healthcare.

TTSF – 235: Smart Traps for Detection and Monitoring of Flying Insect Pests (aka SmarTrapS)

The project developed SMARTRAPS, AI and IoT-based devices for real-time surveillance of flying insect pests with minimal human intervention. Each device includes a main chamber made of Polyvinyl chloride, with a pheromone chamber, a funnel to prevent unwanted insects from entering, and a base plate for collecting trapped insects. Inside, a high-resolution camera, temperature and humidity sensors, and a central monitoring server are housed in an electronic sub-system chamber, protected by a cap. The camera captures images of insects, which are analyzed by an AI model to identify species, count insects, and detect population density. This data is sent to a mobile app for real-time monitoring, temperature and humidity tracking, and analysis of insect trends. SMARTRAPS provide accurate insect counts, helping farmers make informed pest management decisions.



The implementation of the project presents a broad range of benefits. By reducing pesticide use/costs, enhanced crop yield, which in turn has the potential to produce export quality fruits/vegetables are perceived, while simultaneously promoting eco-friendly pest management practices, minimizing the environmental impact. Additionally, they create job opportunities in manufacturing, distribution, and support sectors, fostering economic growth. Farmers are empowered through technology transfer and skill development, equipping them with the knowledge to navigate modern farming practices. With access to real-time data, farmers can make data-driven decisions, optimizing resource allocation and improving overall efficiency. Ultimately, these advancements enhance market competitiveness, enabling farmers to thrive in an increasingly competitive agricultural landscape.

LCF - 278: Conductive polymers-coated sulfur enriched porous carbons as self-supported and flexible cathodes for lithium-sulfur batteries

The project aimed to create a flexible cathode for Lithium-Sulfur (Li-S) batteries by

developing conductive polymers coated with sulfur-doped porous carbons and compounded with Carbon Nanotubes (CNTs). The goal was to reduce the release of polysulfides in electrolytes using conductive polymer coatings. It also focused on making conductive, binder-free, and flexible electrodes by combining porous carbons that hold sulfur, conductive polymers, and Single-Walled Carbon Nanotubes (SWCNTs). Ultimately, the project sought to enable the creation of foldable Li-S batteries with better performance, energy density, and stability.

The project brings numerous valuable benefits across several important areas. In the realm of sustainable manufacturing, it involves collaborating with industry partners to develop and implement cost-effective processes for large-scale production of porous carbons. These carbons are designed with high surface areas and optimized pore sizes, essential for enhancing battery performance. Additionally, environmentally friendly practices are integrated into the manufacturing process, focusing on sustainable sourcing of precursor materials and minimizing the overall environmental impact of production.

The project also emphasizes knowledge transfer by creating educational programmes aimed at sharing key insights on optimizing parameters for porous carbons, ensuring that this expertise is accessible to a wider audience. Collaboration with research institutions further fosters a global community dedicated to advancing energy storage technologies and driving innovation.

In the area of battery manufacturing integration, the project partners with established battery manufacturers to smoothly incorporate advanced processes, such as sulfur encapsulation and conductive polymer coating, into existing production lines. These partnerships ensure that the new technology can be adopted on a wide scale, promoting the commercialization of more efficient, high-performance energy storage solutions.

Innovator Seed Fund

Innovator Seed Fund (ISF) is an initiative under HEDP that aims at engaging entrepreneurs and upcoming aspirants who want to convert their business ideas into action. ISF has provided a package of support and seed funding to early-stage startups through HEC-recognised BICs at universities. The seed funding grant amount is up to $35,000 in addition to support through BICs in the form of entrepreneurial training, legal training and support, financial education, business development service provision, and investment readiness training. In addition, HEC is also planning to scale up the successful start-ups by connecting them with national and international investors/VCs/angels to that they meet their capital needs during the scale-up phase post programme. HEC has successfully awarded 43 grants under the ISF programme, out of which 15 were awarded in 2021-22 Call-I and 28 were awarded in 2022-23 Call-II. The awardees of both calls are final stages of their grant deliverables/achievements for successful conclusion of the grant.

Success Stories of ISF

1. Oxbridge Innovative Solutions – Ejaad Gah – Ms. Manzil-e-Maqsood Founder



Ejaad Gah, a transformative initiative launched by Oxbridge Innovative Solutions, embarked on its inspiring journey in July 2023 and successfully concluded in January 2024 by handing over its first state of the art STEM-lab to Government Girls High School G8/4 Islamabad. This groundbreaking project, supported by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) under ISF, aimed to revolutionize learning environments by establishing makerspaces in schools, with a special focus on empowering young girls.

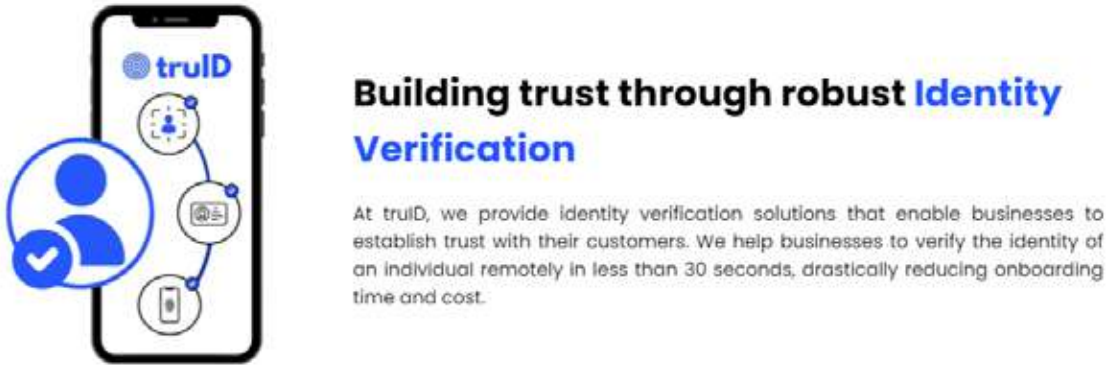
2. VisionRD – Mr. Ammad Nadeem (Founder)



Having a team of purpose driven innovators ready for the next challenge – VisionRD has introduced a range of AI-driven solutions that detects vehicle fault detection at manufacturing level. The VisionRD has recently made trials with CorollaCross and is now in negotiations with national and international leading automobile giants for scaling up its startup.

3. TruID – Dr Abid Rafique (Founder)

TruID, provides identity verification solutions that enable businesses to establish trust with their customers. TruID help businesses to verify the identity of an individual remotely in less than 30 seconds, drastically reducing onboarding time and cost. It is pertinent to mention that truID has successfully deployed their touchless biometric technology and digital onboarding solution in Askari Bank, HBL Microfinance and myTM. They are generating close to Rs. 60 million PKR annual revenue and are being evaluated by NADRA for partnership/acquisition.



Prime Minister Innovation Award (PMNIA)

Prime Minister's National Innovation Award (PMNIA), is an initiative of Prime Minister's Youth Programme, executed by HEC, launched in August 2022.

PMNIA is providing an open opportunity for Pakistani youth within the age bracket of 15 to 30 years to propose innovative ideas and get funding of maximum Rs. 3 million as well as technical support to turn their ideas into a business.

Thematic areas:

- Food security
- Water Management and Sustainability
- Sustainable Energy
- Urban planning
- Climate Change and Environment
- Information Technology and Telecom
- Innovative Governance and Reforms
- Sociology and Philosophy
- Medical and Health Sciences

The objectives of the project are as follow;

- Improving Pakistan's Ranking in the Global Innovation Index,
- Foster Entrepreneurial Culture among the Youth
- Transforming Ideas into a Successful Business



Key achievements during 2023-24 under PMNIA project is as follow:

- National Pitching Competition of Round-2 was held on July 22, 2023 and Awards Ceremony on July 23, 2023.



- Top 10 winners of each round were awarded with the cash amount of Rs. 1.00 million each and 40 runners-ups of each round were awarded with the cash amount of Rs. 0.5 million each
- Investor-Connect for 100 awardees of Round-1 and Round-2 held on July 25, 2023 at Prime Minister's Office.



- Out of 100 awardees of both rounds, 71 opted for incubation.
- All the winners of both rounds are eligible for a follow-up grant of Rs. 1 million subject to their consent for joining 6 Months Incubation at designated incubation centres.
- HEC has partnered up with 18 public sector Incubators across the country to provide Incubation Support to winners of PMNIA along with grant disbursement.
- In addition to Award money, grant up to Rs. 1.00 M is being provided to Top 10 winners as well as 40 runner ups of each round to scale up their ideas based on the achievement of milestones outlined in their approved Cash/Work Plans.
- Tri-partite contracts were signed with awardees during the contract signing ceremonies at their designated incubators across the country for incubation under PMNIA.



- Follow-up activities with awardees of both rounds are currently ongoing.
- Ten (10) PMNIA awardees participated in 23rd ITCN Asia August 31 to September 02, 2023 held at Karachi



- 12 PMNIA awardees participated in 24th ITCN Asia April 18-20, 2024 held at Lahore



International Collaborative Research Grants

HEC encourages collaborative research to broaden research horizons, bringing in much needed diversity/innovation and equipping our researchers with modern techniques being used in technologically advanced countries. For this purpose, several programmes have been introduced, summarized below:

PAK-France (PERIDOT) Research Mobility Grant Programme

PERIDOT is the Franco-Pakistani Hubert Curien Partnership (PHC) Programme providing opportunities to Pakistani and French researchers to interact for joint research activities. The programme is implemented in Pakistan by HEC and in France, jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Development (MAEDI) and the Ministry of Higher Education and Research (MESRI). The objective of this programme is to develop new scientific and technological cooperation between French and Pakistani higher education institutions/research laboratories by supporting the mobility of researchers from both sides. Phase 10 of the PERIDOT Programme was announced during FY 2023-24, under which three mobility partnerships worth Rs. 10 million between Pakistani and French PIs have been awarded.

Innovative & Collaborative Research Grant (ICRG) - PAK-UK Gateway

ICRG is one of the initiatives taken under PAK-UK Education Gateway in partnership with the HEC and the British Council (BC). It supports collaborative research activities among Pakistan and UK based University faculty/ researchers ranging from travel grants to collaborative research grants and development of Research Excellence Framework. ICRG supports research partnerships between Pakistani and UK universities, research bodies and existing centres of excellence for cutting-edge research and innovation in emerging disciplines of knowledge/ priority areas.

No. of Ongoing Projects: 06

Funds Released in 2023-24: Rs. 29 Million

Priority Areas

- Medical and Allied Health Sciences
- Energy (generation, distribution and conservation)
- Climate Change
- Artificial Intelligence
- Robotics
- Nano science
- Big Data – Cloud Computing
- Social Sciences

Success Stories of Innovative and Collaborative Research Grants

Project Title: **Archaeology and Heritage of the British Period in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

Principal Investigators: **Dr. Shakir Ullah– Hazara University, Mansehra**

Prof. (Dr.) Ruth Young, University of Leicester, UK

The project entitled "Archaeology and Heritage of the British Period in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," under the PAK-UK Education Gateway Programme (ICRG-164), was a collaborative research initiative funded by HEC, Pakistan and the British Council Pakistan. The project aimed to explore, document, and analyze the British Period

heritage in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) through its material remains, marking the first comprehensive effort in Pakistan to address this era.

In the first year, the project team laid the groundwork by forming a partnership between Hazara University, the University of Leicester, and the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums for KP. The project leveraged the distinctive and complementary skills of these institutions. Initial activities focused on extensive surveys of rural and urban areas across KP. Teams of archaeologists were deployed to locate, record, and document British-era buildings, structures, and artifacts. The documentation process involved detailed photography, written records, and the collection of spatial data, which was integrated into a Geographic Information System (GIS) for further analysis.

Building on the surveys, the second year concentrated on the excavation of selected sites identified in the initial phase. The excavation work aimed to uncover material culture from the British Period, offering insights into the architectural and social aspects of British colonial presence in KP. The artefacts recovered from these sites were systematically cataloged and analysed, providing critical data on the British influence on local architecture, lifestyle, and urban planning. This phase also involved the interpretation of these findings in the context of historical narratives, with cross-references to accounts in Urdu, Pashto, and English.

In the third year, the project shifted its focus towards translating the archaeological findings into heritage initiatives. This involved engaging with local communities in KP to raise awareness about the significance of British Period heritage and its role in the region's history. The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums for KP played a crucial role in this phase, utilizing its expertise in heritage management to involve diverse communities in preservation efforts. International Conferences, Workshops and heritage tours were organized to showcase the findings, fostering a sense of ownership and appreciation for this period among the local population. The project also produced academic publications, reports, and policy recommendations aimed at integrating the British Period heritage into broader conservation strategies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Over three years, the "Archaeology and Heritage of the British Period in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" project successfully documented and analyzed a previously underexplored era in Pakistan's history. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, the project not only enriched the academic understanding of British Period heritage in KP but also laid the foundation for its preservation and promotion as a valuable cultural asset. The project's outcomes have the potential to influence future research and conservation efforts in the region, ensuring that the legacy of the British Period is recognised and protected for future generations.


Archaeological Excavation of the British Period Fort


Documentation of different British Period monuments

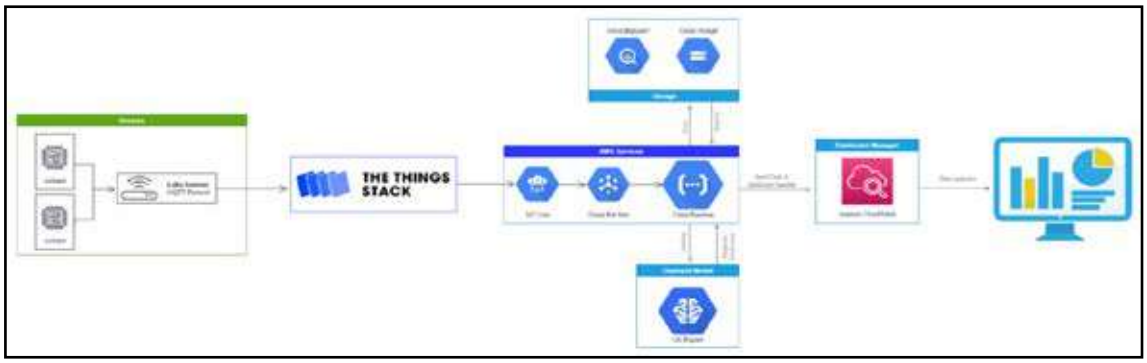
Project Title: Deforestation in Pakistan: Combating through Wireless Sensor Networks (DePWiSeN)

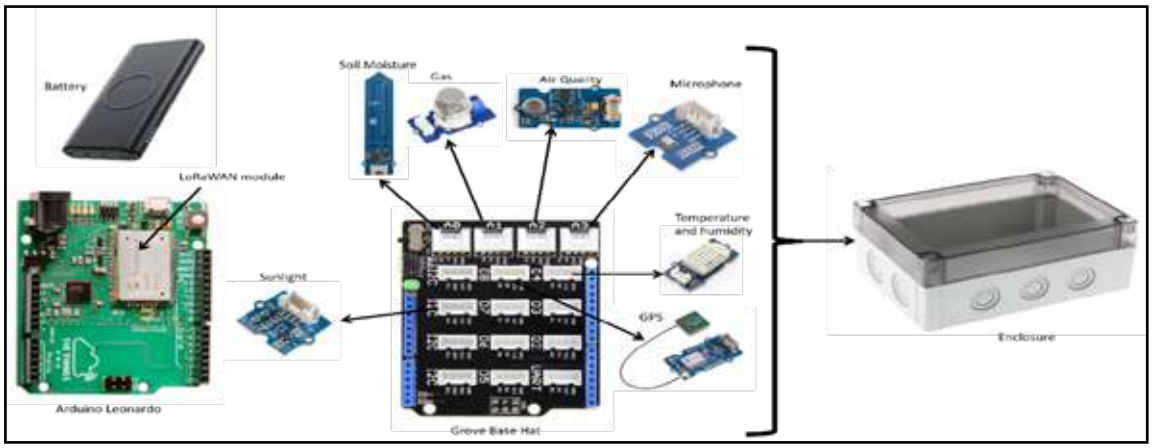
Principal Investigators:

1. Dr. Mumraiz Khan Kasi – BUITEMS, Pakistan
2. Dr. Masood Ur Rehman – University of Glasgow, UK

End-to-end real-time forest monitoring system

The project has developed an end-to-end real-time forest monitoring system that utilizes a LoRa-based data acquisition system, consisting of 7 sensor devices with 11 parameters sensing database, and a live monitoring dashboard with machine learning-based threat alerts. A 12-node testbed was deployed in Glasgow, with the final deployment carried out in Ziarat, Balochistan, to monitor illegal logging, assess tree health, and detect forest fires. These nodes, using TTGO T-Beam modules and operating on the 433MHz LoRa frequency, feature environmental sensors and real-time audio processing, thereby improving coverage and power consumption. The system employs advanced predictive modeling to accurately forecast environmental events, enabling timely responses to threats like illegal logging and forest fires. Real-time dashboards and web portal enhance stakeholder engagement and decision-making. The portal integrates AWS services like IoT Core and CloudWatch to effectively manage and visualize data, displaying real-time sensor readings and alerting users to critical events.

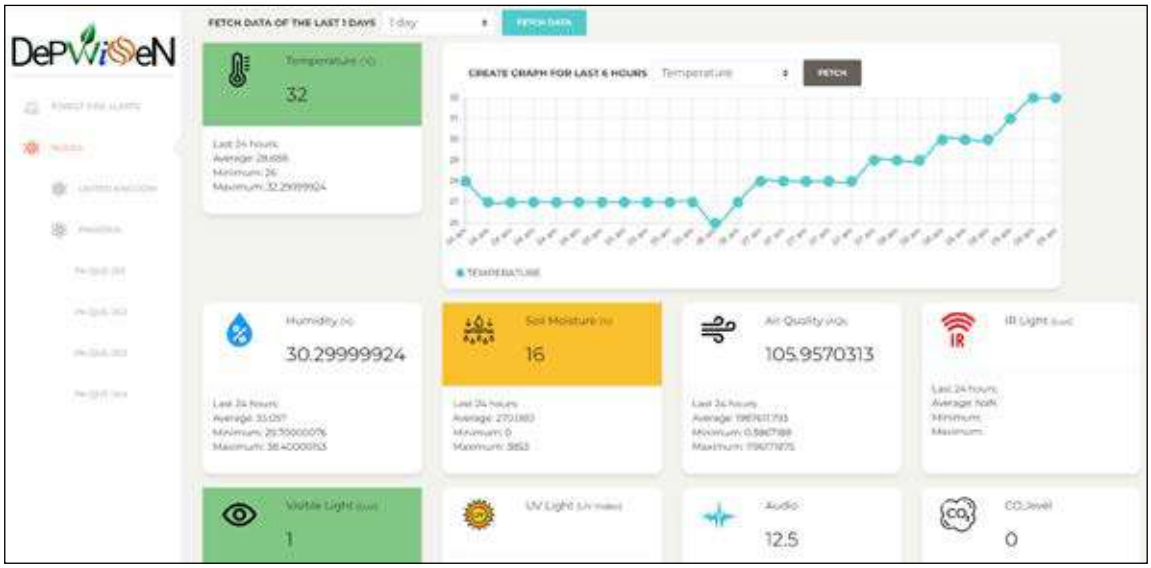




Project Impact and Outreach

The project has made a significant impact by supporting 27 staff and students pursuing MS, PhD, and post-doctoral studies across institutions such as BUITEMS (11), LCWU (6), NED (5), UofG (2), and MDX (3). It has organised over 20 outreach activities and awareness campaigns, showcasing its innovations to industry leaders like Samsung, Virgin Media O2, BriteYellow Ltd., Confirm Centre Ireland, and the Scotland 5G Centre. The project has introduced scientific innovations and disseminated its findings in prestigious venues, including IEEE Sensors and the IEEE Internet of Things Journal. In total, five peer-reviewed journal papers and one conference paper have been accepted and presented, with the journal papers collectively achieving an impact factor of over 20.





Project Title: Development of Nanomaterials based Tactile Sensors for Tele-Manipulation in Robotic Surgery

Principal Investigators: Dr. Mohsin Islam Tiwana- National University of Sciences and Technology

Rebecca Cheung, University of Edinburgh, UK

a. This collaborative effort involved researchers from the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Pakistan, The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom, and the National Centre of Robotics and Automation (NCRA), Pakistan. The project also benefited from the clinical insights provided by an ophthalmic consultant from Al-Shifa Trust Eye Hospital, Pakistan, facilitating the successful demonstration of the developed micro/nano tactile sensors in ophthalmic surgery. The project's achievements have notable implications for Pakistan.

b. The purpose of this research was to address the significant limitation of the absence of tactile feedback in minimally invasive robotic surgery (MIRS), which impairs surgeons' ability to interact effectively with tissue. We developed ZnO nanowires and MEMS-based sensors for force and vibration measurement, as well as vibrotactile actuators and miniaturized accelerometers for tactile displays. These technologies offered small size, low power consumption, enhanced sensitivity, and relatively low cost, making them suitable for integration into tele-manipulation systems. A patent application (22009-D) has been filed for Smart Surgical Instrument.

c. The successful development and integration of micro/nanotechnology-based tactile sensing systems represent a promising step towards safer, more precise, and efficient surgical interventions. This collaborative effort has not only achieved its initial objectives but also delivered innovations that would benefit both patients and healthcare professionals. The project's impact on business generation, employment creation, and economic development underscores its importance and potential to improve the landscape of surgical technology in Pakistan and beyond.



Smart Handheld Surgical Pen with Haptic Feedback

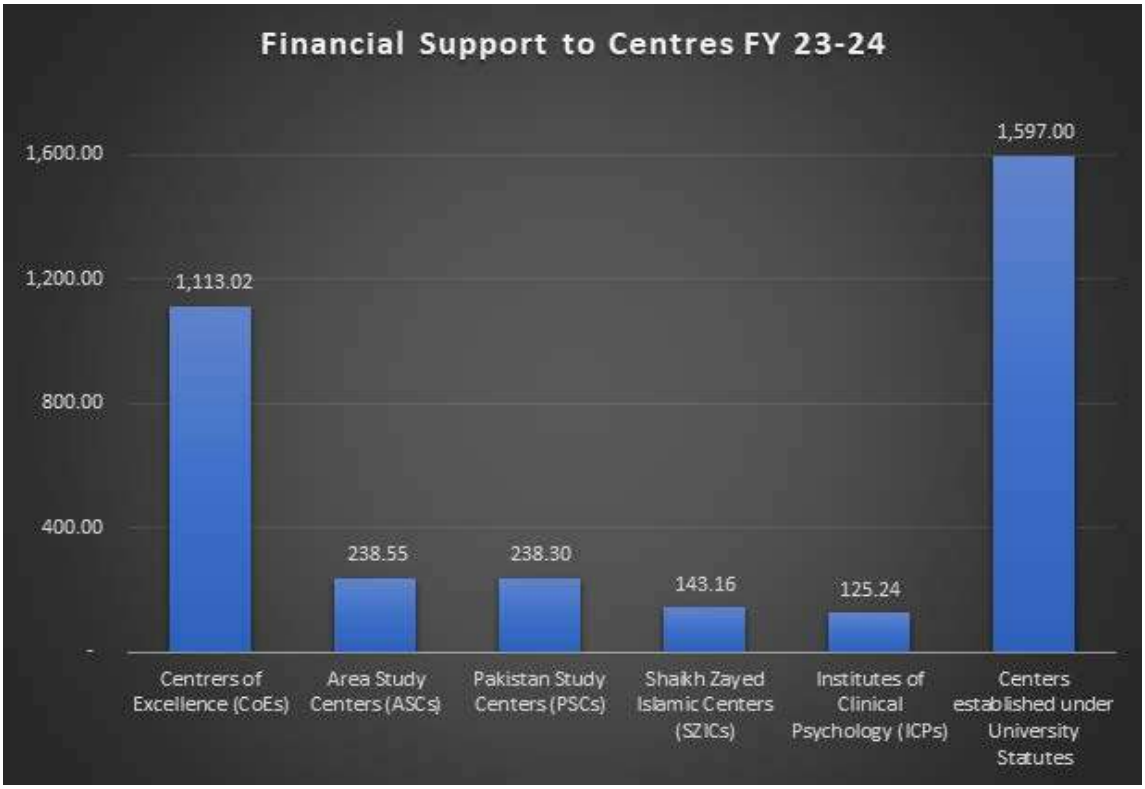


Smart Laparoscopic Surgical Grasper with Force feedback

National Centres

HEC is committed to promoting a strong research culture and offering support to HEIs and research centres located in public universities of Pakistan. The National Centres of Excellence in Research are key hubs of innovation and academic achievement, acting as central points for cutting-edge research and development. These centers, known for their dedication to advanced studies, play a crucial role in the expansion of knowledge across various fields.

These include 11 National Centres of Excellence (CoEs), six Pakistan Study Centres, six Area Study Centres, 9 centres created by university statutes, three Sheikh Zayed Centres, and two Institutes of Clinical Psychology (IoCPs). These centres are funded annually by HEC with a total allocation of Rs. 3455.28 million in FY 23-24. The network of centres also includes eight centres funded byPublic Sector Development Programme (PSDP) and four US-Pakistan Centres of Advanced Studies (USPCAS),



Academic and Research Performance of Centres during (July 2023-June 2024)

These centres, through numerous partnerships with industry and other key stakeholders, serve as platforms for introducing research and development aimed at enhancing their products and services.

The tables below highlight the academic and research achievements of the centres from July 2023 to June 2024.

Activity	Status
No of Students Graduated (BS/MPhill/PhD)	1449
No of Students Enrolled (BS/MPhill/PhD)	1760
Publications (Articles/Books)	216
Events (hold/attended by centres)	411
Research Proposals Submitted for Funding	88
Research Proposals Approved for Funding	51
Research Projects Completed	21
Policy Advocacy or Case Studies Presented to Government Departments:	16
Research Links established with other HEIs / Corporate Sector / Industry / Community (National / International)	23
Contract Research Awarded by Industry or Government Organizations (National / International)	37
Volume of Contract Research Awarded by Industry or Government Organization (National or International)	5
Civic Engagement Events / Initiatives on Issues of Public Concern	30
Consultancy Contracts Executed through CoE with Industry, Commerce or Government:	5
Consultancy Opportunities Identified and Circulated to Faculty / Researchers:	1
Patents, Honors & Awards	133
Collaborations (National/International)	15

Contribution to Strategic Policy Development and Input by Area Study Centres

Each quarter of the fiscal year, the Strategic Policy Planning Cell (SPPC-NSD) under the National Security Division of the Federal Government regularly sends various topics to HEC, requesting research-driven policy recommendations on international matters. These topics are then assigned to relevant Area Study Centres for comprehensive investigation. The following section provides an overview of the policy papers submitted by each Area Study Centre during the 2023-24 fiscal year.

S.	Name of Area Study Centre	Number of Policy Papers
01	Area Study Centre for Middle East and Arab Countries, University of Balochistan, Quetta	02
02	Area Study Centre for Far East and Southeast Asia, University of Sindh, Jamshoro	03
03	Area Study Centre for Africa, North & South America, QAU Islamabad	02
04	Area Study Centre for Europe, University of Karachi	02

05	Area Study Centre for South Asian Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore	03
06	Area Study Centre for Russia, China, and Central Asia, University of Peshawar	01
	Total	**13**

Prominent Accomplishments of PSDP Research Centres during Fiscal Year 2023-24

- IEEE Islamabad Section awarded Lifetime Achievement Award to Prof Chairman/ CPD (NCAI), for his incredible services in the field of Artificial Intelligence.
- Dr. Shahza Anwar (PI of the NCAI) and Professor Zhang Dong won a joint research grant of Rs. 30 million for the research proposal Advanced Vein Detection.
- NCAI signed agreement for academic Collaboration with Tsinghua University (China) on Safe City and Earth quote.
- NCRA signed 03 non-exclusive/exclusive Licenses at national level with M/S Tech Valley (1) and RobotIQs Pvt Ltd (2) for the use in the field of defense sector, healthcare and development respectively.
- NCBC established Research Links with Belt and Road" Aerospace Innovation Alliance (BRAIA) China in the field of Scientific research, technology development and applications.
- NCCS head quarter– Air University Islamabad developed Intellectual Property Rights Policy on July 17, 2023.
- Lunar Cubesat of IST (Institute of Space Technology), Lunar Mission (ILM), has been approved for Rs. 200 million between Pakistan's national space agency SUPARCO, and China's Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU).
- Research Links between IST and OAE Centre Italy for STEM/STEAM based teaching methodologies and activities to science educators in the field of astronomy and astrophysics.
- NCIB arranged international seminar on Tissue Culture Techniques of Tropical Crops in Developing Countries on July 29, 2023 for researchers.
- NCIB and ORIC (UAAR) won the Best Stall of Horti-Expo at Islamia University Bahawalpur and got Shield & Certificate for the best product display.

Research Support Grants

Programme Name	Description	Total No of Applications Processed 2023-24	Total No of Grants Approved 2023-24	Approved Amount 2023-24 Rs. In Million	Total No of Reimbursed Cases 2023-24	Total Reimbursed Amount 2023-24 Rs. In Million
Travel Grant to Pakistani Researchers (TG)	Support Researchers to present paper at national/ international conferences	318	132	20	80	Rs. 20 M
Grant to Organise Seminar, Conference, Symposium & Workshops (SC)	Support for organizing Conference, Seminar, Symposium and workshop at HEIs	102	61	20	64	Rs. 12.6 M

Access to Scientific Instrumention Programme (ASIP)	Facilitate researchers and students to access hi-tech research equipment at labs across HEIs & Research centres	321	300	23.85	286	Rs. 28.20 M

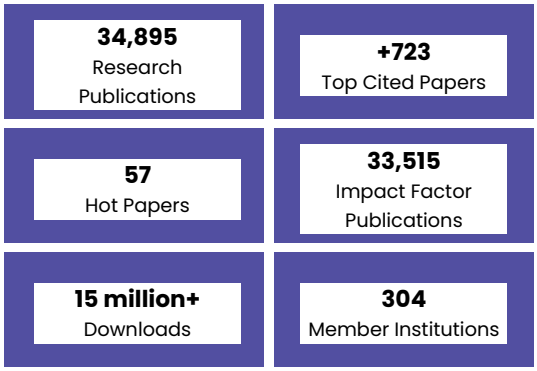
Support for Journals, Publications & E-Resources

National Digital Library Programme

National Digital Library Programme (NDLP) started in 2003 that provides access to state-of-the-art electronic resources comprising of peer-reviewed journals, databases, articles and case studies across a wide range of disciplines. Currently more than 30,000+ journals are accessible 24/7 under this programme. These resources are extended to public and private universities/institutions and non-profit research & development organisations across Pakistan. Digital Library subscribers are required to share subscription cost of digital resources on an annual basis.

Major Achievements 2023-24

- Improved usage of e-resources through regular monitoring and capacity-building activities.
- Cost saving of ~Rs. 798 million after optimizing resources with low usage at the institution's end.
- Cost-sharing policy implemented to provide sustenance to the flagship initiative.
- Onboarding of 14 new members thereby broadening access to Digital Library
- Trained 200+ members to ensure effective utilization of the resources and to spread due awareness.
- Impact Factor publications originating from Pakistan have soared to 33,515



Research Journals & Publications

In order to raise quality of national research journals at par with international standards, HEC has launched **HEC Journal Recognition System (HJRS)** on July 1, 2020 for accreditation and recognition of national and international research journals. Journals registered with well reputed international indexing agencies such as Web of Science and/or Scopus are considered for recognition and categorized into three different levels – W, X and Y – within their respective knowledge areas on the basis of a number of internationally recognised parameters that measure the quality of a journal.

Moreover, HEC facilitates national research journals, published by registered entities (universities or departments of faculties of such entities or registered research institutions/think-tanks or non-profit academic societies) through financial support

and capacity building to enhance their academic and publication standards.

Key Achievements 2023-24	
Recognized Journals in HJRS	**National Journals:** 627 **International Journals:** 29623
Total Spending	**Rs. 44.889 million**

HEC Research Awards

HEC Research Awards aims to recognise and reward excellence in research, contributions to intellectual development and social welfare and promote publications with higher impact.

- HEC announced call for applications under HEC Research Awards 2023 on April 26, 2023
- The award categories and cash prize include:
- Best Researcher: Rs. 500,000
- Best Young Researcher: Rs. 500,000
- Best Publication (Book or Journal Article): Rs. 1 million

The details of the applications received and awarded are as follow;

Broad Disciplines	Award Category	Total Received	Winners
Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Law, Education, Management, or Public Policy	Best Publications	15	1
	Best Researcher	13	1
	Best Young Researcher	32	1
	Total	**60**	**3**
Physical Sciences, Engineering, Technology, Computer Science, Statistics, or Mathematics	Best Publications	7	1
	Best Researcher	40	1
	Best Young Researcher	79	1
	Total	**126**	**3**
Life Sciences, Biological Sciences, Health Sciences, Pharmacy, Agriculture, or Veterinary Science	Best Publications	11	
	Best Researcher	18	
	Best Young Researcher	54	1
	Total	**83**	**1**
	Grand Total	**269**	**7**

Quality Assurance
Division

Introduction

Quality assurance serves as the foundation upon which educational institutions confidently uphold and raise the standards of their educational offerings. In this pursuit, the concept of quality is a vital component of Higher Education Commission's (HEC) plan for the advancement of higher education in the country.

The dedicated efforts of HEC, committed to advancing the standards of higher education across the board, have culminated in a series of policy advancements. Central to this endeavour is the Quality Assurance efforts of HEC, aiming the assurance and enhancement of continuous quality in higher education provided by Pakistani higher education institutions (HEIs), making it at par with international benchmarks. A milestone in this journey is the formulation of essential criteria and policies by the Quality Assurance Division (QAD) of HEC. These policies include Graduate Education Policy, having minimum requirements for MS/MPhil and PhD programmes to faculty appointment criteria, anti-plagiarism policy, and Tenure Track Statutes. These policies collectively serve as the yardstick for all HEIs to follow with the best institutions surpassing in their commitment to excellence.

Recognising that the faculty is the lifeblood of academia, HEC has placed speccial emphasis on improving the quality of teaching. This is achieved through Faculty Appointment Criteria, which guides the recruitment of qualified and experienced educators. The introduction of QA criteria for Meritorious Professors and Professors Emeritus further demonstrates our commitment to recognising and rewarding exceptional educators. The Tenure Track System (TTS) for faculty appointments, with its competitive, market-based salaries, encourages educators to excel in research, teaching, and community service. TTS operates on a performance-based model, rewarding those who contribute significantly and remain steadfast in their commitment to the noble profession of teaching. Additionally, TTS has facilitated the emergence of teaching as a desirable career path for young PhD scholars.

In tandem with these faculty-centric initiatives, we have also been steadfast in our mission to eliminate the scourge of plagiarism from academic writing. Anti-Plagiarism Policy, developed and executed with rigorous oversight, represents a rigorous effort to maintain the integrity of academic research. Furthermore, we provide Turnitin (a Software) service to aid in the detection and prevention of potential instances of plagiarism, thereby upholding the highest standards of academic integrity.

Key Components of Quality Assurance

HEC has developed and implemented various quality parameters to enhance the quality of higher education through the following initiatives:

- National Qualification Framework (PQF)
- Pakistan Qualification Register (PQR)
- Eligibility Criteria for Faculty Appointment (Lecturer to Professor for all Disciplines)

- Model Tenure Track Statutes for faculty appointments under Tenure Track System
- Anti-Plagiarism Policy (Version 2.0)
- Graduate Education Policy 2023
- NOC for MS/MPhil and PhD Programmes
- Open and Distance Learning: Policy Provisions and Regulatory Framework 2024

Tenure Track System

Background

Tenure Track System (TTS) is an incentive-driven faculty appointment system introduced in 2004, tailored to stimulate research activities within universities offering attractive salary packages to faculty members reliant on their performance in publishing high-quality research papers, securing research grants, and mentoring PhD candidates etc. In 2008, to standardise this system, the Tenure Track Statutes Version 2.0 was introduced, mandating their adoption by universities offering TTS positions.

To ensure and maintain the quality of TTS appointments, HEC initiated the endorsements of TTS appointments made by public sector universities in 2007-08. However, recognising the potential for enhanced quality assurance through alignment with the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) review processes, the management of HEC decided to discontinue the endorsement of TTS faculty appointments and advised QAD to revise the existing Model TTS Statutes Version 2.0.

TS Appointments and Endorsements by Universities/HEIs:

Consequently, a notification was issued on February 7, 2022, stating that the initial appointments, tenure, and promotions of TTS faculty members would now be directly determined by the statutory bodies of universities, without the need for subsequent endorsement by HEC. The decisions taken by the universities under the TTS Version 2.0 amended/clarified to-date shall be treated as final.

Furthermore, QAD is actively working on drafting Model TTS Statutes Version 3.0 through the TTS sub-committee established by the Commission. Once the draft is finalised by the Committee, it will be presented to the Commission for review and approval. This ongoing process demonstrates the commitment to continually improving and refining the TTS system to promote autonomy and research excellence within universities.

Anti-Plagiarism Policy and Turnitin Software

Background

Anti-Plagiarism Policy holds significant importance within education, academia,

research, and professional domains. Plagiarism refers to the act of using someone else's ideas, words, or work without proper attribution, presenting them as one's own. This policy outlines well-defined responsibilities for both the educational Institutions and HEC. It explicates the types of plagiarism, appellate process and has clear grounds for determining the severity of penalties that were missing in the previous version.

The Revised Anti-Plagiarism Policy

The introduction of Anti-Plagiarism Policy by HEC is a commendable step as it serves to strengthen the value of authenticity, honesty, and ethical behavior among students, faculty, and researchers' community. This initiative motivates individuals to create content that is both original and well-researched.

Equitable assessment holds paramount importance within educational and scholarly contexts. Plagiarism distorts the assessment process by creating an uneven playing field where some students or researchers may achieve higher grades or recognition unfairly. An anti-plagiarism policy guarantees that individuals receive appraisal grounded in their genuine capabilities and diligent endeavors. Consequently, HEC's Anti-Plagiarism Policy safeguards authentic contributions and promotes proper referencing and acknowledgment of sources. This helps to maintain the rights of content creators and fosters a culture of respect for intellectual property. In essence, this revised policy advocates for openness, integrity, and answerability among students, faculty, researchers, and academic institutions.

Electronic Similarity Detection Systems/Software (Turnitin)

Turnitin (Plagiarism Prevention Service) is provided to all public sector universities and to those private sector universities which pay annual subscription fee are also given access to the service. The government R&D organisations as well as institutions of public policy are also given access on request.

Four online capacity building workshops were organised for Turnitin administrators and instructors in all public and private universities. The topics covered were how administrators can use account features, manage instructor accounts, and handle student licenses effectively as well as how instructors interpret AI and similarity reports using the software.

Open and Distance Learning: Policy Provisions and Regulatory Framework 2024

HEC approved its Online and Distance Learning (ODL) Policy 2021 on October 7, 2021, with the aim of providing affordable and quality education to students and circulated it to HEIs for information and adaptation on February 25, 2022. The policy outlined minimum requirements for launching programmes through an ODL mode, which included

establishing an ODL Management Office (OMO) and an ODL Academic Council (OAC), acquiring required technologies, incorporating a Learning Management System (LMS), and arranging necessary infrastructure.

However, during the assessment of the first NOC request under the policy, it was found that the document did not sufficiently guide various academic aspects from an ODL perspective, such as curriculum and instructional design, content, and material development, and ODL delivery mechanism etc. Additionally, some provisions of the policy, such as establishing the ODL Academic Council and ODL Management Office, were also found conflicting with the existing organizational structure of HEIs. This situation led the HEC management to get feedback from academia.

The Revised Policy

Accordingly, a revised policy titled Open and Distance Learning: Policy Provisions and Regulatory Framework along with an associated toolkit was approved by the Commission on August 28, 2024. The policy encompasses all the minimum standards and guidelines to impart distance education for level 5 and 6 qualifications with a stronger focus on curriculum design and development; content and material creation; delivery; and assessment. It also emphasis the use of technology, availability of necessary infrastructure, and mechanism for quality assurance.

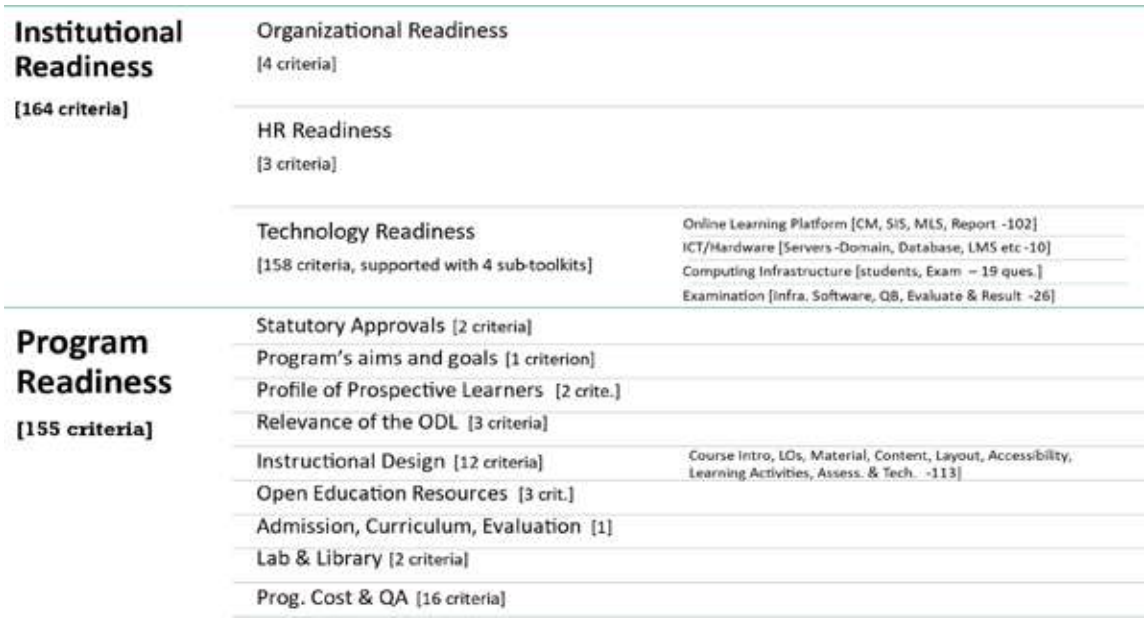
The revised policy has two parts and reinforces its spirit by explicitly outlining the Principles and Policy Provisions in Part-I that must be adhered during implementation following the detailed Regulatory Framework provided in Part-II. The salient features of the revised policy compared with the ODL Policy-2021 have been outlined hereunder:

Differentiating Areas	Provision in Original Policy 2021	Provision in Revised Draft
Title	Online and Distance Learning Policy	Open and Distance Learning Policy Provisions & Regulatory Framework
Definitions	Provides definitions of important terms used in ODL system.	The revised policy covers some more definitions for further clarifications
Vision	-	Yes
Mission	-	Yes
Scope	Yes	Yes
Objectives	Yes	Yes

Part-1: Principals and Policy Provisions	The existing policy encompasses both the policy provisions and implementation guidelines / criteria in a combined manner against the following areas: ▪ Eligibility Conditions ▪ ODL Management Office ▪ ODL Courses ▪ Faculty Training ▪ Technology Infrastructure and Software ▪ Laboratory and Practical Instructions ▪ Examination and Assessment ▪ Library and Digital Resources ▪ Open Education Resources ▪ Student Support ▪ M&E ▪ Review and Update ▪ Repeal	The revised policy takes a comprehensive approach to Open and Distance Learning (ODL), with a stronger focus on curriculum design and development, content and material creation, delivery and assessment, and quality assurance mechanisms, while the previous policy primarily emphasised technology and infrastructure oversighting necessary aspects of the following areas: ▪ Governance of ODL ▪ Curriculum and Instructional Design ▪ Content and Material Development ▪ Information Sharing Process ▪ ODL Delivery Mechanism ▪ Student Support Services ▪ Evaluation and Assessment Mechanism ▪ Human Resources ▪ Quality Assurance ▪ Repeal

Part-II: Regulatory Framework	The existing policy does not provide any regulatory framework	The PART-II of the revised policy offers a Regulatory-Framework against each provision of the policy discussed in Part-I including: 1. Governance, HR, Academic, infrastructure, and technological requirements. 2. It also addresses the student support and information system with detailed guidelines about admissions, fees, financial aid, and grievance settlement procedures. 3. The Regulatory Framework also encompasses the requirements and processes for seeking institute and program level NOC from HEC, with clearly defined QA role.

The ODL Toolkit



The toolkit associated with the policy has the following composition:

GRADUATE EDUCATION POLICY-2023

Over a period of two decades, HEC introduced various policies to enhance the quality of graduate programs in Pakistan. More or less, these policies were focused on program-level minimum criteria, such as qualification, entry test, CGPA, CH, coursework, publication, dissertation, supervisory load and criteria, and faculty requirements. Meanwhile, HEC also issued several supplementary notifications elaborating the given criteria in pieces. Despite this, the worth of graduate education has always been a matter of concern. Lastly, HEC issued its policy on PhD Programme in 2021; however, it received little support from the academia across the country due to disagreement with several aspects of the policy.

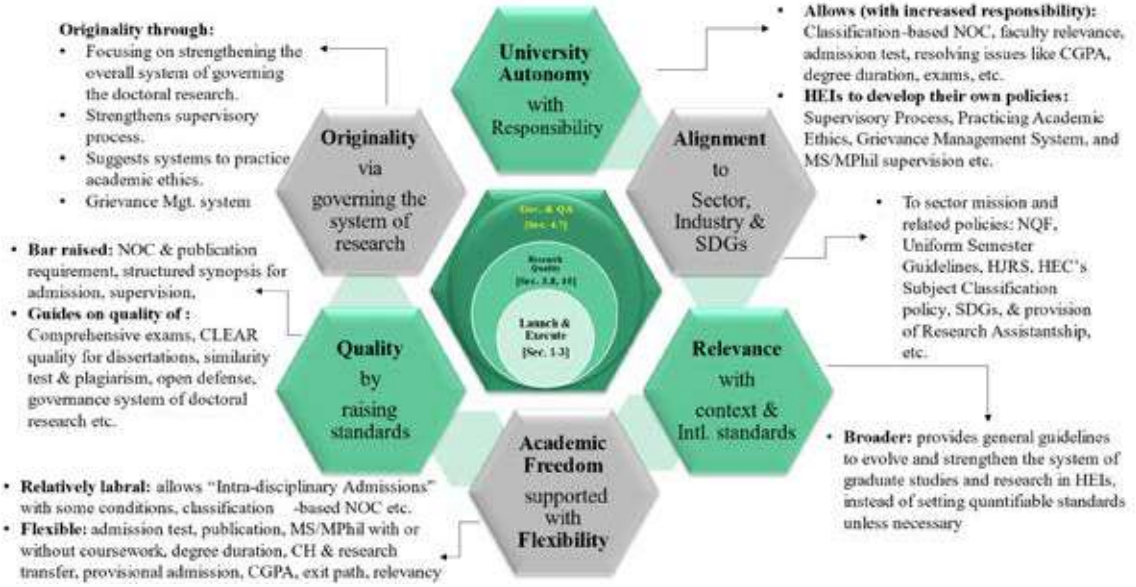
Many felt that the policy was too focused on coursework and not on research. Despite extensive discussions at the institutional level, various Vice Chancellors' forums, and technical experts' committees, a consensus could not be developed. Learning through the experience, Chairman HEC decided to review the policy afresh through feedback from the entire academia. As a result, the HEC introduced the revised Graduate Education Policy-2023 (GEP-2023).

In line with its name, GEP-2023 encompasses all the minimum standards and guidelines to impart Level 7 and 8 qualifications, with a special emphasis on governance of the doctoral research system in HEIs and quality assurance, while all the previous policies, including the PhD Policy 2021, focused merely on program-level requirements. Accordingly, the revised policy, while addressing the concerns of the stakeholders regarding admission and credit hours requirements, also embarks on various aspects of a quality dissertation along with research ethics, the roles and responsibilities of research supervisors and supervisees, and the conditions regulating their relationship and the handling of grievances.

Further, the new policy, while appreciating university autonomy within the ambit of their charters/acts, seeks to strike the right balance between autonomy and regulatory constraints. Hence, the requirement of obtaining NOC for the launch of a new graduate program has been relaxed for the top HEIs, ranked through a system as may be prescribed, while the lower-ranked HEIs must seek HEC's NOC. However, these HEIs can exercise their autonomy in determining faculty relevance at their end by adopting the mechanism prescribed in the policy. Lastly, this policy also suggests retributive actions for the HEIs violating the provisions that it prescribes.

4. Overall, the policy has three parts:

(i) Minimum Standards and Guidelines for Launching a Program and Awarding Degrees, Part-I; (ii) Governance of Doctoral Research System, Part-II; and (iii) Quality Assurance, Part-III.



An overview of the policy is depicted by the following diagram:

NOC to Start MS/MPhil/PhD and Equivalent Programmes

In order to ensure quality of graduate programmes, HEC requires public and private sector universities of Pakistan to obtain NOC from QAD before initiating their MS/MPhil/ equivalent and PhD programmes. NOC is granted based on fulfillment of the minimum requirements prescribed by HEC in terms of availability of relevant faculty, admission eligibility criteria, entry test policy, curriculum relevance, and thesis review policy etc. The measure aims at ensuring that the institutions should start the new programs only when they ensure appropriate preparation for the purpose of providing quality education.

The response from universities is enormous in terms of the number of cases being received. QAD is doing its level best to process all the cases within the minimum possible time. Details about NOCs issued from July 2022 till June 2023 is given below.

Degree Level	July 2023 to June 2024
MS / MPhil or Equivalent	259
PhD	142
	Total: 401



National Qualification Framework

In pursuance of enhancing quality of higher education across the country, and to bring the HEIs at par with international standards, HEC has developed the National Qualification Framework (NQF) that provides a systemic picture of all the qualifications, academic levels and learning outcome within the national education system. NQF is considered as a mechanism for classification of the qualifications based on the learning outcomes, i.e., skills, competence, and knowledge.

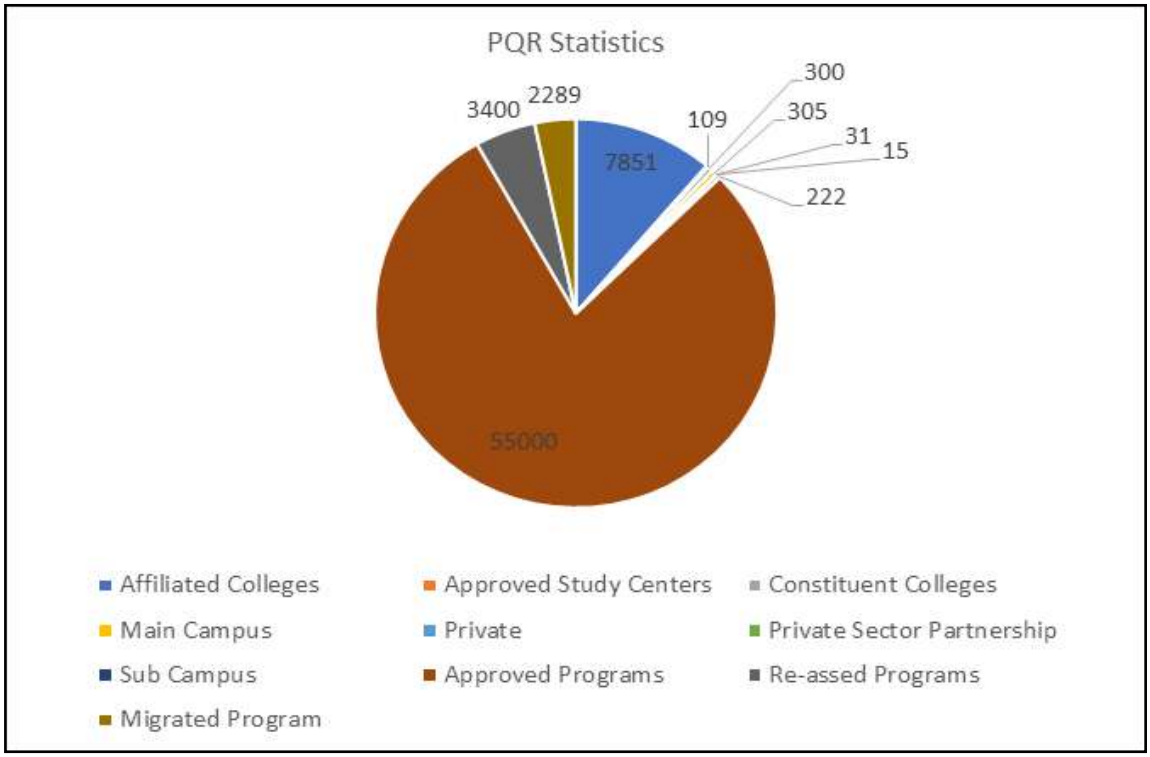
NQF encompasses a comprehensive list of all quality assured qualifications in Pakistan. Each accredited qualification offered in Pakistan has been assigned a level. NQF consists of entry level to level 8 qualifications, describing the difficulty of qualification at each level. Below are the details of qualifications and their level.

	Levels	Award Type	Award Example	Semester	Technical/Vocational
Higher Education Levels	8	Doctoral	PhD	Minimum 18 credit hours course work and dissertation evaluated by at least two Ph.D. experts from technologically/ academically advanced foreign countries in addition to local doctoral Committee	
	7	Masters	M.Phil./MS/MBA, M.Sc. (Eng.), M.E, M.Tech	minimum 30 Credit Hours with thesis or without thesis	**M.Tech** (Master in Technology)
	6	Bachelor (Hons)	BS, B.E, B.Arch., BSc (Eng.), BSc (Agri), B.Tech (Hons) MA/MSc (16 year), LLB, B.Com (Hons), MBBS, DVM,	8-10 semesters/124-40* Credit Hours	**B.Tech (Hons)** (Bachelor in Technology)
	5	Associate Degree Ordinary Bachelor	BA/BSc (Pass), B.Tech (Pass), Associate Degrees etc	4-6 semsters/50+ Credit Hours	**B.Tech (Pass)** (Bachelor in Technology)
Higher Secondary Education	4	Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC)	F.A, F.Sc, ICS, I.Com, DBA, D.Com etc		**DAE** (Diploma of Associate Engineer) (College of Technology / Polytechnics)
Secondry Education Level	3	Secondary School Certificate (SSC)	Matriculation		**National Vocational Certificate (Level 1 to 4)**
Basic/Elementary Education Level	2	Middle (3 Years)			
	1	Primary (1-5 Years) Pre-Primary (1-2 Years)			

Pakistan Qualification Register

Pakistan Qualification Register (PQR) serves as a comprehensive compilation encompassing all higher qualifications in Pakistan that have undergone through quality assurance processes. It includes a detailed inventory of qualifications, along with the officially recognized and accredited HEIs that are authorised to confer and administer these qualifications. Here are the statistics regarding these recognised qualifications and the higher education institutions involved.

S.No	Entry	Total no approved in PQR
1	Affiliated Colleges	7851
2	Approved Study Centres	109
3	Constituent Colleges	300
4	Main Campus	305
5	Private	31
6	Private Sector Partnership	15
7	Sub Campus	222
8	Approved Programmes	55000
9	Reassessed Programmes	3400
10	Migrated Programme	2289
	Total Programmes	**60689**



QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY

Introduction

The vision behind the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) is, "To promote, enhance and assure the quality of higher education across HEIs in Pakistan."

The Government of Pakistan in 2005 established Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) through HEC. QAA is a policy-making and monitoring organisation aiming to enhance and assure quality in higher education institutions (HEIs). It ensures systematic implementation of quality enhancement procedures/criteria to attain improved levels of international compatibility and competitiveness for institutions and degree programmes.

HEC is providing funding and logistical support for making QAA fully functional. QAA manages the affairs in collaboration with Quality Assurance Division of HEC, whereas Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), comprising eminent educationists, serves as its Advisory board. QAA is working to safeguard public interest by enforcing good practices in education and encouraging continuous improvement in the higher education quality.

Goals

- Policy-making and development of practical guidelines of quality assurance related to the higher education degree programmes
- Developing guidelines for establishment of Quality Enhancement Cells and their Monitoring & Evaluation
- Capacity-building to enhance the standard of quality assurance in higher education at national level
- Monitoring and regulating HEIs for implementation of policies to improve quality and standard of higher education in Pakistan

Functions

- Developing practical guidelines and policies for establishing Quality Enhancement Cells at public sector universities for integration of quality assurance in the higher education system
- Monitoring, evaluation and capacity building of all Quality Enhancement Cells
- Capacity building of selected professional staff of Quality Enhancement Cells to serve as Master Trainers after receiving training in quality assurance, to increase the levels of international compatibility through skill enhancement in the respective field.
- Hiring services of local as well as foreign experts, having practical exposure of academic quality assurance for conducting trainings/workshops/seminars for capacity building of QAA and QEC staff.

Structure



Success Story

Launch of Revamped QA Framework

HEC launched the revamped Quality Assurance Framework, "Pakistan Precepts, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (PSG-2023) in August 2023. With this, Pakistan has taken a significant step forward in its pursuit for academic excellence with the official launch of Revamped Quality Assurance (QA) Framework for Higher Education. The launching ceremony, held in Islamabad, in collaboration and support of British Council Pakistan, brought together esteemed dignitaries, education experts, and stakeholders from across the country.

The Revamped QA Framework is a collaborative effort of QAA HEC, QAA UK and British Council. This framework, developed through extensive consultations with key stakeholders such as Vice Chancellors, faculty, Directors of Quality Enhancement Cells (QECs), and students from 22 diverse public and private sector universities across different regions and institutional types, addresses both global best practices and local contextual challenges.

The Revamped QA Framework represents a paradigm shift in how higher education quality is assessed, maintained, and enhanced. Crafted through collaboration with international experts, the framework aligns with global best practices while addressing the unique needs of the Pakistani education landscape.

The framework introduces a comprehensive review mechanism based on 16 Institutional Quality Reviewing Institutional Performance and Enhancement (RIPE) Standards. Down the road, the framework has the capacity to classify the institutions

into categorisation based on their performance. The major categories accordingly are four colours – Green (most effective), Blue (progressive), Yellow (average), and Grey (unclassified) – determining their funding and customised policy interventions.

The Revamped QA Framework aligns with international benchmarks, enhancing the recognition and reputation of Pakistani institutions on the global stage. It promotes collaboration, quality enhancement, and academic integrity. The launch ceremony witnessed the presence of high-ranking officials, including former Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Minister of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Chairman HEC, Country Director British Council Pakistan, Vice Chancellors, Deans and senior university and other government officials.





Quality Enhancement Cells (QECs)

The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is an integral part of each degree awarding institution (DAIs). To strengthen Internal Quality Assurance mechanism, QAA is working in close liaison with Quality Enhancement Cells (QECs) of DAIs in order to improve quality at programme level through programme level Self-Assessment and Postgraduate Programme Review as well as at institutional level through Self-Institutional Performance Evaluation.

QAA has set up QECs with the mission of instilling a culture of quality in DAIs. To achieve this goal, over 250 DAIs have established and activated QECs to enhance their internal quality assurance processes, aligning them with the minimum requirements of external quality assurance organisations. Additionally, both institutional and programme-level mechanisms have been developed for external quality assurance (EQA).

Progress Review Meetings

In line with the PSG-2023, QEC Section arranged several Progress Review Meetings and Capacity Building Workshops having onboard relevant stakeholders of all higher education institutions. The details of workshops are as follows:

S.no	University	City/Province	Date Conducted	Participants HEI
1	NUST	Islamabad	6-8 March 2024	43
2	KMU	Peshawar, KP	16-18 April 2024	42
3	FCCU	Lahore, Punjab	24-26 April 2024	32
4	Sukkur IBA	Sukkur, Sindh	30 April - 2 May 2024	33
5	AKU	Karachi, Sindh	6-8 May 2024	36
6	KSBL	Karachi, Sindh	9-11 May 2024	38
7	LUMS	Lahore, Punjab	20-22 May 2024	36



NUST, Islamabad


KMU, Peshawar


FCCU, Lahore

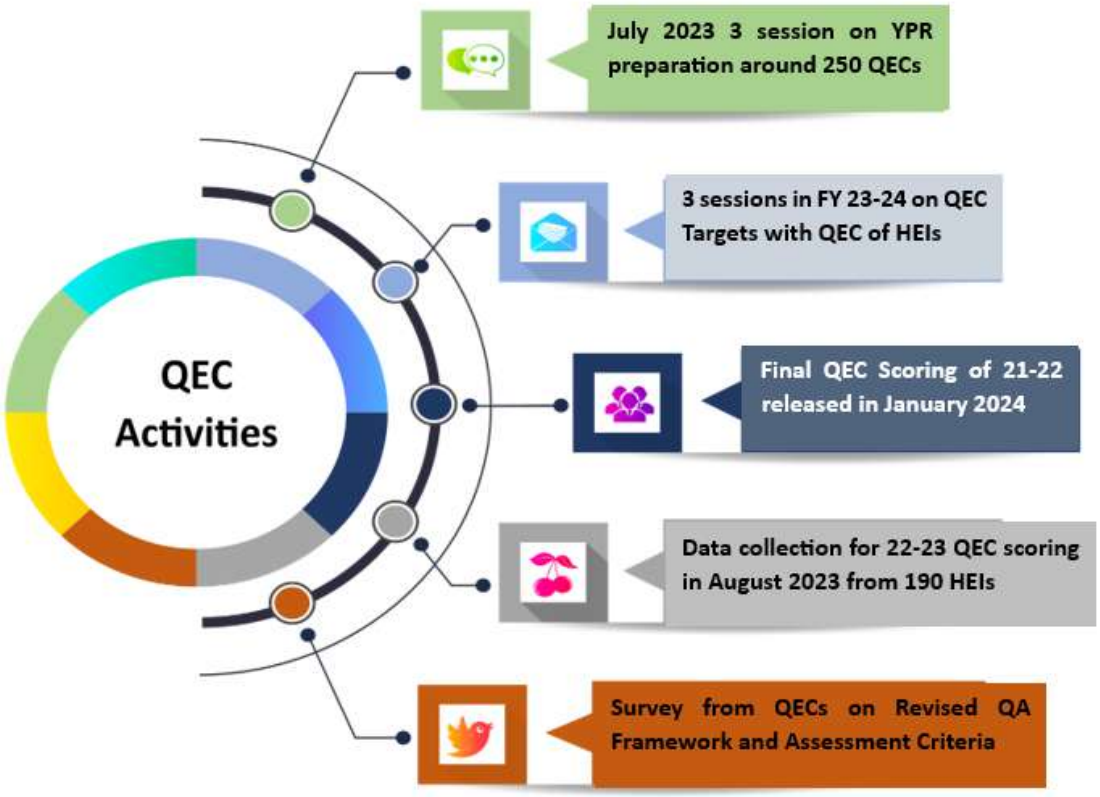

Sukkur IBA, Sukkur


AKU, Karachi


KSBL, Karachi


LUMS, Lahore

QEC Activities and Performance



Institutional Performance Evaluation (IPE)

Following the launch of the Revamped QA Framework, QAA shifted its focus to executing the key activities. This phase saw the QAA intensively collaborate with various stakeholders from numerous universities across Pakistan, ensuring that the newly established framework was integrated effectively. These activities included providing targeted support for the alignment of institutional policies with the framework, conducting workshops and training sessions, and continuously monitoring compliance with the updated quality standards. The overarching goal of these efforts is to promote sustained improvement and excellence in higher education across the country.

Orientation Webinars

The IPE Section of QAA conducted a series of webinars, introducing the Revamped Quality Assurance Framework, known as PSG-2023. These webinars, strategically organised in four groups, took place in November 2023, and were attended by faculty members, QEC representatives, and stakeholders from all 254 universities across Pakistan. A key highlight of these sessions was the interactive Q&A segment, where participants actively sought clarifications and provided valuable feedback. The queries raised about the PSG-2023 framework were thoroughly addressed by

QAA officials, leading to a sense of satisfaction among participants. Many expressed their confidence in the comprehensive development process of the framework and conveyed optimism that HEC QAA's efforts would significantly enhance the quality of higher education in Pakistan.



Webinar on the Revamped Quality Assurance Framework for Higher Education (PSG-2023)

Capacity Building and Consultative Workshops on Revamped QA Framework

Seven stakeholder consultation workshops were held across various regions of Pakistan to receive feedback on the PSG-2023 framework, which was essential in refining it to better address the diverse needs of higher education institutions. A key focus of these workshops was in-depth sessions on RIPE. These sessions provided participants, including QEC Directors from 260 universities, with a comprehensive understanding of the new standards and guidelines, further enriching the discussions and shaping the future of quality assurance in higher education.



RIPE Session at IBA Sukkur

RIPE Session at IBA Sukkur

These sessions also included Focus Group Discussions which played a crucial role in evaluating and refining the standards of RIPE. These interactive sessions allowed participants to analyse and brainstorm on the practicality and effectiveness of the standards, gather feedback, and suggest enhancements. The discussions were structured to include an introduction to their purpose, group segmentation for focused discussions, evaluation of specific standards, and presentation of findings. Key takeaways from these sessions were practical insights into standard implementation, collaborative refinement of standards to ensure practicality and effectiveness, and stakeholder engagement to address diverse institutional needs.

Active student engagement in QAA workshops was pivotal in incorporating the student perspective into the development of PSG-2023. This approach ensured that the standards and guidelines are student-centric and responsive to their needs. The engagement structure included an introduction to the importance of student participation, interactive sessions for sharing experiences and suggestions, and structured feedback mechanisms. Key takeaways included ensuring that the standards are aligned with student needs, gathering valuable insights for identifying gaps and improvements, and promoting an inclusive development process that fosters ownership and accountability among students.



Students attending training sessions at Sukkur IBA



Student giving feedback on RIPE at KSBL, Karachi

Graduate Programme Review (GPR)

As per the mandate of HEC, QAA evaluates the performance of higher education institutions in the country. QAA assesses/reviews MS/MPhil and PhD (Level 7 & 8) Programmes of the universities against HEC Minimum Criteria for Admission in MS/MPhil and PhD or Equivalent Programmes. So far, postgraduate programmes of approximately 240 universities have been reviewed.

In the FY2024-25, QAA will carry out the Gradate Programme Review (GPR) of 20 universities/HEIs.

The total number of higher education institutions, and the MPhil and PhD programmes reviewed in FY2023-24 is given below.



Accreditation Councils

Accreditation Councils were formed as an accreditation authority to assess, inspect, and monitor the quality standards that should be followed and offered on regular basis in various degree granting institutions and affiliated colleges. The primary goal of programme accreditation is to ensure a minimum level of quality (as a compliance mechanism), while also encouraging specific institutes to improve for the benefit of all stakeholders.

HEC has established five Accreditation Councils for university programmes in agriculture, business, computing, teacher education, and technology to standardize quality through rating procedures.

A brief overview and the progress for the FY 2023-24 of these five accreditation councils is as under:

National Computing Education Accreditation Council

HEC established National Computing Education Accreditation Council (NCEAC) in 2005. It is a recognised accreditor of bachelor's level computing degree programmes in Pakistan. It ensures the quality of education which students receive in higher education institutions in Pakistan. It provides world leadership in assuring quality and in stimulating innovation in applied sciences, computing, engineering, and technology education. NCEAC has visited 178 computing programmes during the FY 2023-24.

National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education

National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (NACTE) was established in December 2006 by HEC. It was established with a mandate to accredit teacher education programmes offered by public and private sector universities and teacher education institutions in Pakistan. The main focus of NACTE is to serve as a national resource to accredit and certify teacher education programme based on the accreditation standards underlying the framework of the National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan. In this FY 2023-24, NACTE has accredited 76 Teacher Education Programmes across the country.

National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council

HEC established National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC) in 2006, having representation of experts from agricultural universities and research institutions, leading industries and R&D institutions in public and private sectors. NAEAC is working with a mandate to develop a dynamic and evolving mechanism of quality assurance of agriculture and allied education to meet the current and emerging challenges of knowledge economy. In this FY 2023-24, NAEAC accredited 100 Agriculture Programmes across the country.

National Business Education and Accreditation Council

National Business Education and Accreditation Council (NBEAC) was established in 2007 by HEC with the mandate of enhancing quality of Business Education.

NBEAC has three main functions: accreditation, training and networking. In its accreditation function, it develops and implements standards to improve the quality of business education in Pakistan. In terms of training, it provides opportunities to faculty and managers to learn about quality standards and related matters. In its networking function, it provides a forum for business education professionals to learn from each other through conferences and seminars. In FY 2023-24, NBEAC accredited 25 Business Education Programmes.

National Technology Council

National Technology Council (NTC) established in 2015 is a subsidiary of HEC operating with the mandate to regulate technology education at graduate and postgraduate levels in Pakistan and register engineering technologists on its roster. Through an intense accreditation process, the regulatory framework ensures that standards are met by higher education institutions running technology programmes. NTC ascertains that technology education curricula are aligned with NTC and HEC guidelines, have substantial equivalence with international standards, have inbuilt Continual Quality Improvement (CQI) protocols, and are based on Outcome Based Education (OBE) defined by the Sydney Accord. During FY 2023-24, NTC has accredited 97 Technology Programmes.

Information Technology Division

1. Introduction

Information & Communication (ICT) is dominantly contributing to the economic development of many countries. It is transforming every aspect of 21st century: Manufacturing of information products - computers, e-books, multimedia devices and software and the delivery of information services - financial services, education, utilities, telecast services are the prime emphasis of leading countries.

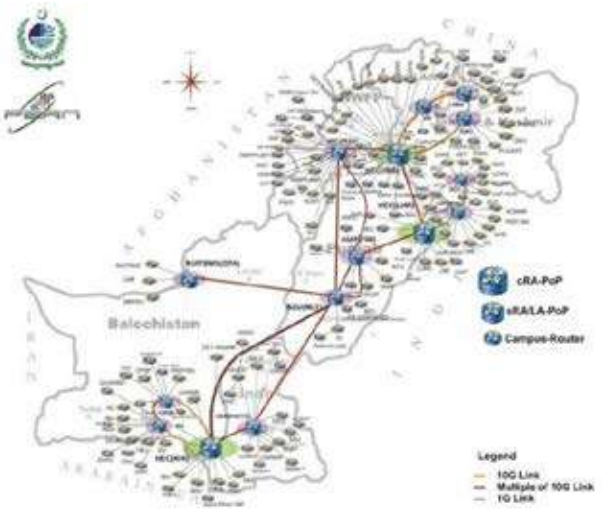
Higher Education Commission (HEC) is implementing new strategies for meeting the rising demand of technology embedded in higher education and growth challenges. It has embraced the digital revolution of information and communication technology and is successfully utilizing it for dissemination of higher education, increasing productivity and promoting innovation. HEC aims to ensure a comprehensive information and communication technology plan for implementation to develop a knowledge society in Pakistan by strengthening the higher education institutions (HEIss) with computing and telecommunication infrastructure.

There have been significant developments and enhancements in various services offered by HEC to HEIs across Pakistan. Pakistan Education & Research Network (PERN), being at the forefront, with footprints across the country providing high speed connectivity to HEIs. The bandwidth growth has been significant, whereas the core network service availability surpassed 99.9%. The research and collaborative activities in the field of higher energy physics, telemedicine, and network technologies brought true value as per the spirit of PERN. Video conferencing, being one of the applications of PERN, has been a true enabler to the students and researchers of higher education.

Helping universities with technology upgrades has been a significant achievement whereby desktop computers and servers are upgraded with the latest operating systems and software. Other technological advancements witnessed the introduction of virtual desktop interface as a cloud application and SaaS based unified communication services to the higher education institutions. The HEC online degree attestation & equivalency services, online scholarship services and HEIs ranking offered by HEC underwent major developments in past years to provide a feature-rich experience to the public availing themselves of various HEC services.

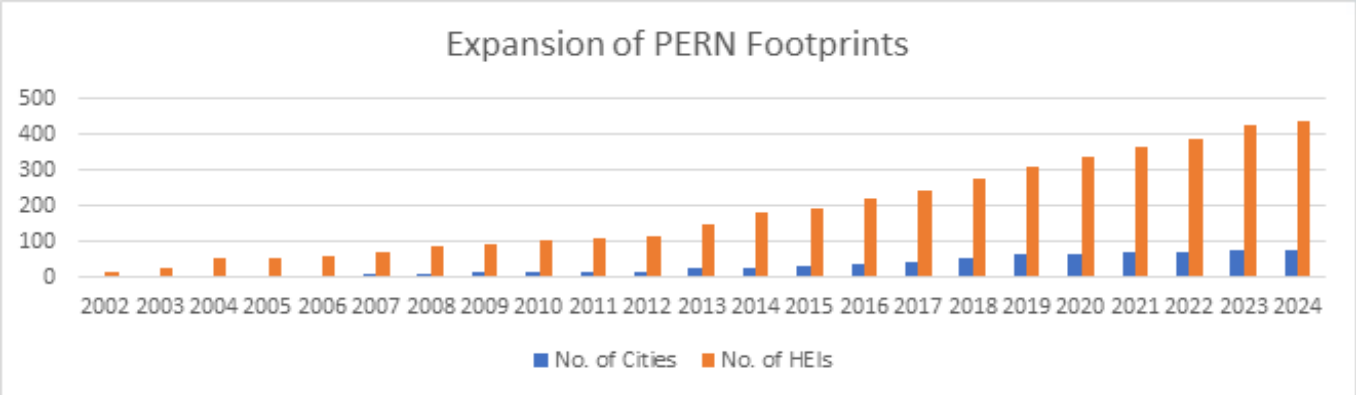
2. Pakistan Education & Research Network (PERN)

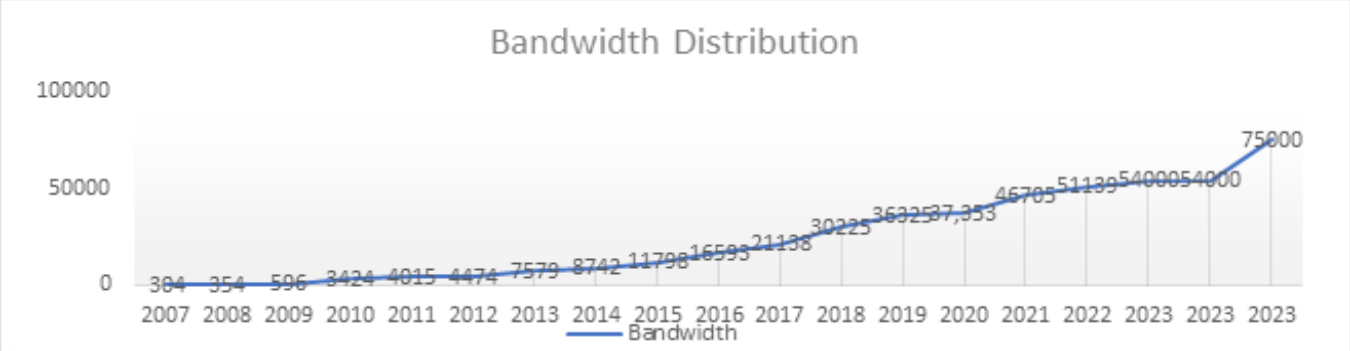
Since its inception, Pakistan Education and Research Network (PERN) has been offering a reliable, stable state-of-the-art communications network for research and collaboration to HEIs of Pakistan in areas like grid



computing, high energy physics, telemedicine, and video conferencing. These network-based services are not only available within the country, but they are also helpful in research and education connectivity with other National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) of the world and their consortia, serving the academic and research community globally. The educational and research activities of PERN are diversified ranging from network technologies and physical sciences to medical and health sciences.

The following two graphs depict the expansion of PERN – HEIs-and bandwidth-wise over the years.





The PERN backbone has been significantly upgraded under the PERN-III Project to meet the evolving needs of the research and education (R&E) community and support the growing demand for research in universities, particularly in emerging technologies. PERN-III now features an ultra-high-speed 40 Gbps core backbone network, with the capacity to scale up to 100 Gbps, interlinking over 70 cities nationwide. This robust digital infrastructure connects HEIs to essential national and global resources, including data, tools, and virtual classrooms, which are pivotal to driving innovation in today's digital economy. The network currently supports more than 500,000 researchers across 400+ universities, institutes, research organisations, and colleges in Pakistan. Furthermore, to strengthen resilience and expand the footprint of PERN, several initiatives are currently being implemented. Some of these initiatives have been completed, while others are expected to be finalised within the next year.

In addition to the connectivity of new HEIs on PERN, the HEC IT Division has successfully completed major upgrades and expansion projects for the PERN network with particular

focus on underserved areas, including the significant expansion of the Optical Fiber Gigabit Network to the Turbat and Gwadar regions. Previously, these areas were served by wireless connections, with no fiber infrastructure available to connect HEIs. The new PERN fiber-optic network provides stable, high-speed internet access, enabling HEIs in these regions to enhance their educational and research capabilities.

The expansion brings several benefits, notably the availability of gigabit-level bandwidth, which allows HEIs to access modern educational resources, experience advanced PERN services, research databases, and e-learning platforms that were previously difficult to use due to limited connectivity. The fiber network also supports digital campuses, enabling activities like video conferencing, virtual labs, and online collaboration that were challenging in the past due to certain limitations of wireless connection. This transformation improves the overall reliability and stability of internet services, critical for remote learning and research.

By introducing fiber-optic infrastructure, these underserved regions now have the opportunity to participate fully in global academic and research networks, enabling international collaborations and access to massive open online courses (MOOCs). This initiative is also helping faculty and students of the respective institutions to access a wide range of online resources, research databases, and educational platforms, enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. It also facilitates seamless communication, virtual collaboration, and participation in global academic networks, empowering both faculty and students to engage in cutting-edge research and professional development opportunities. Overall, the development of PERN in Turbat and Gwadar enhances educational equity and supports long-term economic and technological growth in these areas.

3. Research Collaborations

3.1. Asia Pacific Advanced Network (APAN)

PERN is Primary Member of Asia Pacific Advanced Network (APAN). APAN works for the promotion of network technology developments and advances in network-based applications and services across the Asia-Pacific region. APAN organises bi-annual meetings in the Asia Pacific Countries to collaborate, discuss, synergize on global collaborative innovation by providing unprecedented access to digital resources, instrumentation and expertise for education, research, and societal benefit. This year APAN organised APAN-56 in Colombo Sri Lanka on August 21–25, 2023 and APAN-57 in Bangkok Thailand on January 29–February 2, 2024. Officers from IT Division participated in these events where they explored and learnt about technologies and applications including, identity & access management, e-culture, disaster mitigation, cloud computing, AI driven networks, routing, security and others. During the APAN-57, Member IT HEC Dr. Jamil Ahmad announced about hosting the next APAN meeting, APAN-58, in Islamabad, Pakistan on August 26–30, 2024.

3.2. Asi@Connect/Trans Eurasia Information Network (TEIN)

PERN is a member of the Trans Eurasia Information Network (TEIN) and connected with TEIN Singapore POP at 2.5Gbps dedicated for R&E purposes. TEIN is managed by the TEIN Corporation Centre based in Seoul Korea. TEIN is utilised for international joint research in cutting-edge areas, including information telecommunication and future internets. The current phase of the TEIN Project is Asi@Connect, which provides dedicated high-capacity internet connectivity for research and education communities across Asia-Pacific; operating at speeds of up to 10 Gbps, it currently interconnects universities and research centres in 21 countries across the region. It also connects to 50 million European researchers and academics served by GÉANT network and supports collaborative programmes in areas such as earth observation, disaster warning, climate research, food security, delivery of e-health and e-learning.

4. Smart Education through Smart Universities

4.1. Transformation towards Smart Universities

The Smart Universities initiative has equipped the higher education institutes across the country with advanced WiFi technology by providing wireless blanket coverage across campuses, enabling users to freely access internet in all open and indoor areas across the campus. The Smart Universities are equipped with indoor and outdoor wireless Access Points, and Wireless LAN Controller enabling HEIs with local management of WiFi services along with a backup Wireless LAN Controller for unforeseen situations. A monitoring system has been deployed centrally with full access to the higher education institutes to monitor and manage their respective wireless network.

Furthermore, the Safe Campus project, launched in April 2017, was included in this initiative, in addition to WiFi services, to help improve the overall security at campuses. HD Cameras and intelligent video analysis technologies are being installed at campuses, covering the main entry/exit points as well as buildings and parking lots etc., along with installation of monitoring equipment. The campuses are equipped with HD IP camera system integrated with Power-over-Ethernet (PoE) ports on the NVR having centralised and distributed monitoring, with an addition of facial detection system, including facial recognition software, video summary software. The Smart Universities as well as Safe Campus (SUSC) initiatives are being executed on service delivery models in which services are acquired for seven years on lease basis with equal payment of instalments.

Key Indicators	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Total Smart Universities deployed	9	8	14	19	12	25	10	-	-	97
Trainings given to University POC	9	16	29	32	28	10	19	19	-	162
Total Safe Campus deployed	-	-	14	15	15	8	19	20	-	91

5. TEIR-III/Rated-3 TIA Certified Data Center in UET Lahore and NED Karachi

HEC has developed a Tier-III certified state-of-the-art data centre, setting a benchmark for technological excellence and infrastructure resilience, at UET Lahore. This advanced facility boasts multiple independent distribution paths for power and cooling, ensuring continuous operations even during maintenance activities. With an impressive uptime of 99.982%, the data centre guarantees minimal downtime, significantly enhancing the reliability and availability of critical academic and research data. Withered with robust security measures, the centre is designed to safeguard sensitive information against both physical and cyber threats. Furthermore, the data centre's scalable infrastructure allows for seamless expansion, accommodating the growing needs of the university and the wider educational community. This strategic investment underscores HEC's commitment to leveraging cutting-edge technology to support academic innovation and research excellence.

Objectives and Services Offered through Data Centre

The HEC aims to shift all services of PERN to its Tier-III certified data centre represent a strategic move towards enhancing the reliability, security, and scalability of Pakistan's educational and research infrastructure. The services include internet connectivity, intranet connectivity, High Performance Computing (HPC), Data Hosting and Storage, Digital Library Access, Video Conferencing, E-Learning Platform, Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), E-mail Services, Cloud Services, Network Security, Server Colocation or Rack space, Technical Support and Content Delivery Network (CDN). By centralising PERN's services in this cutting-edge facility, HEC aims to foster a more resilient, efficient, and secure digital environment that can seamlessly support the evolving demands of Pakistan's educational sector.



- High Performance Computing (HPC)
- Data Hosting and Storage
- E-mail Services
- Virtual Desktop Infrastructure

(VDI)

- E-Learning Platform
- Cloud Services
- Server Colocation or Rack Space
- Content Delivery Network (CDN)
- Digital Library Access
- Video Conferencing
- Network Security
- Internet and Intranet Connectivity

These services will be offered to the universities at subsidised and competitive rates. The recovery made from the universities will be spent on the operational costs of the data centre, enabling maintenance and continuous improvement in services. This sustainable financial model not only supports universities but also ensures that the data centre remains a state-of-the-art facility, equipped to meet the ever-evolving needs of academic institutions.

6. National Video Conferencing Network

HEC, while supporting the mandate to develop e-Academia, established the national video conferencing network for the higher education sector and provided world-class purpose-built video conferencing facility at all the public sector universities across Pakistan. Video conferencing has proven to be a cost-effective solution to higher education in Pakistan. It has emerged as an effective tool to enhance student-teacher interactions; bridge the gap of good faculty; and, meet the shortage of faculty members at the universities located at far-flung areas. A total of 180 video conferening sites have been established with national video conferencing infrastructure.

7. HEC – Microsoft Education Al-liance



For the HEC's vision of end-to-end digitised education sector of Pakistan, HEC has always strived hard to bring opportunities to stream the awesome pool of intellectual students, keen researchers, qualified faculty & competent IT administrators in all the HEIs of Pakistan. Through a joint venture of HEC and Microsoft, we will be depicting a crystal-clear image of Digital Pakistan. Through Education Transformation Agreement (ETA), we have been able to deliver smooth learning experiences, as harnessing the suite of Microsoft products has been



a boon in modern digital education. Our partnership with Microsoft is now entering into its 15th year which reflects our strong commitment to equipping our HEIs with world class educational software needed to efficiently excel in this ever-evolving education landscape.

ETA was need of the hour

HEC has placed a special focus on elevating the standard of higher education in the country. With a significant emphasis on infrastructural development, the commission acknowledged the importance of software and applications in campus digitization. However, we recognised the need for continuous upgrades of operating systems and software packages to keep up with the rapidly evolving technological landscape.

Addressing the Infrastructural Gap

One of the major challenges faced by HEIs in Pakistan was the lack of access to up-to-date, licensed software & cutting-edge infrastructure. This hindered their ability to fully leverage technological advancements for academic and administrative purposes.

7.1. The Strategic Education Alliance Agreement with Microsoft

To address the technological infrastructure gap and promote digital transformation in HEIs, HEC has taken a proactive step by signing a strategic Education Alliance Agreement with Microsoft. This alliance aims to provide licensed software and infrastructure to all HEIs across the country.

7.2 Advantages of the Education Alliance Agreement

The agreement with Microsoft brings forth several benefits for higher education:

✓ *Access to the Latest Technologies* ✓ *Empowering Faculties and Students* ✓ *Strengthening IT Administration* ✓ *Fostering Innovation and Research* ✓ *Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability* ✓ *Digital Productivity* ✓ *Classroom Modernisation* ✓ *Platform & Cloud Products*	✓ *Business Solutions* ✓ *Certifiable Skills Enablement* ✓ *Transform Learning* ✓ *Skills Development* ✓ *Microsoft Student Developer Programmes* ✓ *Technology Roadshows and Boot Camps* ✓ *ERP & CRM Systems for Education* ✓ *Student Hackathon – Imagine Cup*

7.3 Initiatives taken under HEC Microsoft Education Alliance

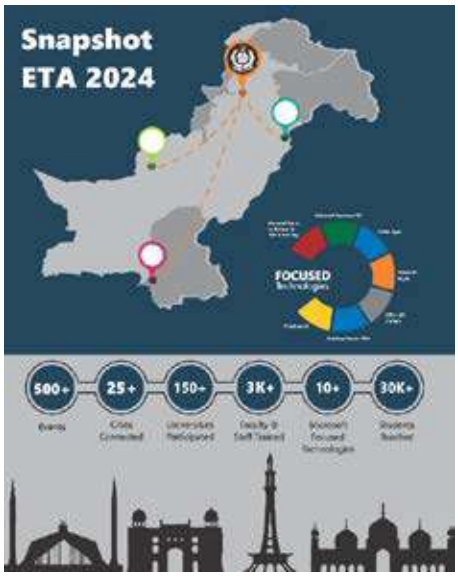
1- Enrollment for Education Solution (EES)
2- Education Transformation Agreement (ETA)

7.3.1. Enrollment for Education Solutions



7.3.2. Education Transformation Agreement (ETA)

For more than a decade, HEC-Microsoft Education Transformation Agreement has been providing practical advice to help universities develop a strategy for digital transformation with a holistic, long-term view implemented in discrete phases that a university can begin today.



Programmes Included in ETA:

- Microsoft Learn for Educators
- Technology Roadshows & Bootcamps
- Students Tech Competition (Imagine Cup)
- Skills Development
- Microsoft Student Developer Programs
- Benefits for Faculty, Students & IT Admins

ETA Delivery Summary:

- More than 100 Online & In-person Activities
- Over 20 Cities Connected
- 100+ Universities
- Over 5000 Faculty/Staff Trained
- More than 50,000 Students Reached
- Over 15 Technologies



HEC-Microsoft Imagine Cup & Founders Hub 2024

Over the last two decades, Microsoft's global student technology competition has attracted over two million participants, all driven to build meaningful projects, create positive change in their communities, and make impactful innovations. In the 2024 Imagine Cup, the world's brightest young minds came together virtually to revolutionise solutions that address today's most pressing global challenges across four categories: Earth, Education, Health, and Lifestyle.

Global & National Level Recognition:

- GIKI Swabi (Team Sign Saathi qualified for top 20 teams around the globe)
- Air University – Kamra (Highest Participation from Pakistan)

Highlights of Different Programmes



8. ICT Services at HEC Offices

HEC has established technically advanced and outstanding ICT infrastructure at its Secretariat in Islamabad as well as at its regional offices in Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, and Karachi. The HEC network provides IT facilities, such as Video Conferencing, Interactive Lecturing, Internet, Email, VPN, SAP, Internal and External Portal, Files Sharing, Unified Communication, ERP, DAS, Education TV, E-Office, Smart classroom etc., to the employees of HEC and the users of universities/institutes,. The HEC network has XGIG (10Gbps) capacity, and all buildings and data center network equipment are connected through redundant optical fiber cable, network security is achieved through firewalls, and endpoint solution whereas network monitoring is done through network monitoring software.

8.1. HEC Data Centres

Available at both the HEC Secretariat in Islamabad and its regional offices in Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, and Karachi, the HEC network offers a range of IT services, including Video Conferencing, Interactive Lecturing, Internet, Email, VPN, SAP, Internal and External Portal, Files Sharing, Unified Communication, ERP, DAS, Education TV, E-Office, and Smart classroom capabilities, to HEC employees and users at universities and institutions. The network operates at XGIG (10Gbps) capacity, and all buildings and data centre network equipment are connected via redundant optical fiber cable. Network security is ensured through firewalls and endpoint solutions, while network monitoring is carried out using dedicated network monitoring software.



8.2. HEC Data Centre's Hosting Services



- Successful deployment, migration, and management of MS Cluster 2019 is completed for hosting the HEC Local Services on the High Availability (HA) with Failover Clustering-based features, the migration done seamlessly and with zero down time for HEC live services from MS 2012 & 2016 clustered platform.
- Microsoft Email Exchange 2013 is upgraded to MS Exchange 2019 on locally hosted HEC infrastructure in Islamabad HEC Datacenter. As part of this upgrade process, transition of our Active Directory environment to the latest version, with changes to the forest and domain functional levels from 2012 to 2016. Additionally, we are upgrading our email server to Exchange Server 2019 ultimately.
- Maintaining separate Active Directory for authentication of cluster 2016/19 to ensure the better security and zoning on infrastructure access level.
- Provisioning of additional storage via SAN 5500 v5 for the BPAS Project in RC Lahore Datacenter to cater more data influx for scholarships and degree attestation databases.
- Facilitated the with virtualised compute infrastructure for the launch of Digital Learning and Skill Development initiative with Coursera for phase II (Cohort 1 & 2).
- Facilitated the with virtualised compute infrastructure for the migration and launch of Foreign Degree Equivalence system for online service access via https://www.eservices.hec.gov.pk/
- National Technology Council and Education Testing Council are provided with virtualis ed compute services on HEC data centre Islamabad infrastructure for their portals to provide the online services to the students, faculty and academia 24/7 for scholarships, jobs and registrations etc.

8.3. HEC ICT Services

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the HEC network infrastructure for the fiscal year 2023-2024. The HEC network encompasses critical components, including the Datacenter Network, Network Operations, and Network Monitoring Systems, serving the HEC head office, as well as regional centers in Peshawar, Lahore, Quetta, and

Karachi. This infrastructure has been instrumental in delivering advanced ICT services to HEC employees and users at universities and institutions across Pakistan.

Network Infrastructure Overview

The HEC network is a robust and integrated ICT infrastructure designed to cater to diverse stakeholder needs. The services provided include Video Conferencing, Interactive Lecturing, Internet Access, Email Services, Virtual Private Network (VPN), SAP Integration, Internal and External Portals, Unified Communication, Degree Attestation System (DAS), Education TV Broadcasting, E-Office Solutions, AGPR PIFRA Solution access for financial transactions.

During the past year, the HEC network infrastructure has achieved several significant milestones:

1. **Enhanced Performance**
    - Continuous upgrades and maintenance have resulted in exceptional network performance and uninterrupted service availability.
2. **Improved Reliability**
    - The introduction of redundant components and optical fiber interconnections has significantly enhanced the network's reliability.
3. **Security Reinforcement**
    - The implementation of advanced security solutions, including VAPT tools, endpoint protection, MDR, and SIEM, has fortified the network against vulnerabilities and cyber threats.
4. **Operational Excellence**
    - The integration of a centralised monitoring system enables real-time visibility and swift responses to network incidents, ensuring consistent service delivery.

8.4. National Higher Education Web Portal



The National Higher Education Web Portal focuses on enhancing the visibility and outreach of HEC's function viz. scholarships, fellowships, attestation services, research support, quality assurance, finance & development, learning innovation, statistics, and sports. A glance at the figures given below indicates the effectiveness and outreach of the National Higher Education Web Portal over the years:

HEC's website revamp allowed to realise the following Milestones

- **HEC Services and Persona Based**
- **To provide information on minimum clicks**
- **On-Premises Hosting**
- **Mobile Friendly & Search Oriented**
- **Multilingual Support**
- **Social media integration**
- **On-Premises Hosting:** HEC hosts the website on its own premises at HEC Regional Centre Karachi data centre
- **Persona Based:** The Home Page is realigned as per the priorities of Personas. So that the Services offered by HEC are highlighted upon entry/ visit of the portal and aligned to personas. For example, the public service officer profile should be able to see HEC Govt. Services area/section/ page whereas Students should see services like scholarships, attestation etc. HEC aims to provide an easy way to access information for sites visitors based on their interest areas



- **Social media integration:** The solution should provide integration with the social networking capabilities, i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In etc.
- **To provide information on minimum clicks:** The key services across the website have been easily accessible with minimum possible clicks/navigation path to the end users based upon their personas.
- **Mobile Friendly & Search Oriented:** HEC website enables users to browse the content on the site using different browsers, mobile and tablet devices and also provides the ability for end users to search the content inside the site.
- **Multilingual Support:** The website will be in both English & Urdu

Audience Overview

Achievements	2023-24
No. of Sessions	12.9 Million
No. of Page Views	377 Million
No. of Users	6.5 Million

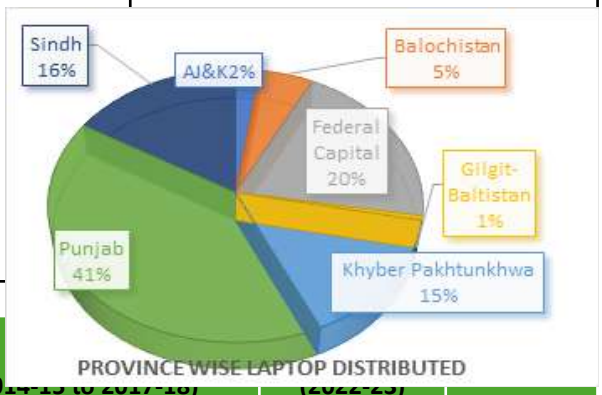
9. Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme

Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme has been contributing towards the digital economy by enriching young minds and exposing them to the vast global village by distributing free laptops to high-achieving students since 2013. To date, 500,000 laptops have been distributed. To facilitate our students in this digital world, the scheme has been resumed.

PM Youth Laptop Scheme Phase-III is continuing with the scope of 100,000 Laptop for distribution among meritorious students. As per approved scope, 100,000 Laptops have

been procured and delivered at all relevant public sectors and distributed, gender wise laptops distributed from Phase-I to Phase-III)

Province	Laptop Distributed
Azad Jammu & Kashmir	**14181**
Balochistan	**30031**
Federal Capital	**121362**
Gilgit-Baltistan	**3195**
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	**89242**
Punjab	**241647**
Sindh	**97478**



PROVINCE WISE LAPTOP DISTRIBUTED

Gender	Phase – I (2013-14)	(2014-15 to 2017-18)	(2022-23)	
Female	31,320	176,124	57,127	264,571
Male	68,680	223,876	42,873	335,429
Total	100,000	400,000	100,000	600,000
Females in %	32%	44%	58%	44%
Males in %	68%	56%	42%	56%

In addition, PM Laptop Scheme Phase-IV has also been approved in the budget in 2023 and has been included in PSDP FY 2023-24. In this phase, the Government of Pakistan aims to distribute 100,000 laptops to outstanding students, reaffirming its commitment to enhancing educational standards and supporting academic excellence.

10. Digital Learning and Skills Enrichment Initiative (DLSEI)

HEC and Coursera have been in partnership since 2018 under Digital Learning & Skills Initiative (DLSI). This collaboration aims to enhance digital learning, upskill the youth, and equip university students and faculty members with modern, globally recognized skills. In 2024, the partnership reached a new milestone with the successful launch of Phase III.

10.1. Objectives of the Partnership

- To provide free access to world-class online courses for students, graduates, and faculty members across Pakistan.
- To bridge the skills gap in emerging technologies and professional development.
- To promote digital literacy and skill-building aligned with global market requirements.
- To strengthen the country's higher education sector by equipping students with job-ready skills.

10.2. Key Achievements (2023-2024)

a. Access to Learning Opportunities
   i. Over 80,000 learners have benefited from the program since its inception.
   ii. A cumulative total of 500,000 course enrolments were recorded across diverse skill areas.
   iii. Learners accessed courses from top global institutions, including Yale University, Stanford University, and Google.

b. Skill Development in Emerging Fields
   i. Courses in Digital Marketing, Data Science, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cloud Computing, and Cybersecurity were the most sought-after.
   ii. More than 50,000 certifications have been awarded, boosting the employability of graduates.
   iii. Special emphasis on soft skills like communication, leadership, and project management.

c. Faculty Engagement and Development
   i. Over 1000 faculty members participated in capacity-building programs.
   ii. Faculty were able to integrate online learning into traditional teaching methodologies, fostering a hybrid education model.

d. Supporting Women in Digital Learning
   i. Nearly 45% of total enrolments came from female learners, promoting gender inclusivity in digital education.
   ii. Specific initiatives were introduced to empower women through targeted skills programs.

10.3. Impact on Higher Education and Workforce Development

- Enhanced Employability: Graduates have acquired in-demand skills, making them competitive in local and international job markets.
- Capacity Building: Universities have integrated online learning solutions into their academic frameworks.
- Economic Impact: The initiative has contributed to closing the digital divide, preparing a skilled workforce aligned with Pakistan's economic growth.
- Innovation: Introduction of modern courses has sparked innovation and interest in entrepreneurship and tech startups.

10.4. Launch of Phase 3 (2024)

The newly launched Phase III focuses on:

- Expanding access to 100,000 additional learners.
- Introducing AI-driven learning analytics for performance tracking.
- Partnering with Coursera to launch localized learning pathways specific to Pakistan's job market.
- Promoting blended learning models through university workshops and training sessions.

10.5. Challenges

- Conducting nationwide awareness campaigns for optimal utilisation of available resources
- Universities face resistance in adopting blended learning models due to outdated curricula and faculty reluctance
- Limited access to digital infrastructure, particularly in remote areas, hampers smooth implementation of digital courses
- Balancing traditional academic workloads with online learning opportunities is challenging for both students and faculty
- Many learners face language barriers and struggle to complete advanced courses delivered in English
- Insufficient funding for expanding digital initiatives limits the programme's reach and scale
- Policies supporting employability pathways and industry collaboration remain underdeveloped

10.6. Future Roadmap

- Continued collaboration to further increase course offerings
- Develop customised learning programs for universities
- Focus on vocational training and micro-credentials for high-demand careers
- Expansion to marginalised and underserved regions to ensure digital inclusion

The HEC-Coursera partnership has successfully transformed the digital education landscape of Pakistan. With the launch of Phase III in 2024, the collaboration is set to achieve new heights by empowering a new generation of learners, equipping them with essential skills, and driving the country toward a digitally skilled workforce.

4. Smart Universities: Transformation through Smart Classrooms

The quality of teaching and learning environment and its assessment are global challenges. The rapidly changing technologies will continue to address these challenges. The Smart Classroom concept will subdue the circumscribed teaching/learning environment by exposing students, inter alia, to vast online and offline resources, providing them access to quality faculty, contents, and new programmes. This fundamental change will impact on what we teach, how we teach and where we teach. The concept of Smart Classroom is emerging across the world and is being adopted by the academic institutions at all levels to help improving access and quality and transforming knowledge-based economy.

HEC is taking advantage of developments in ICT initiatives through such an ambitious programme of networking and computerisation of every public sector university, their link to each and one other via a high-speed dedicated PERN, and provision of services such as the digital library, unified communication, blanket Wi-Fi coverage intends to equip 50 public sector universities and their campuses with Smart Classroom facilities.

This has rapidly followed the rollout of second-generation Pakistan Education & Research Network (PERN-II), and subsequently launch of the PERN-III providing scalable 40Gbps backbone with HEIs connectivity up to 10 Gbps.

The phase I of the project "Smart Universities: Transformation through Classrooms" is structured for 50 main classrooms in the public sector universities across Pakistan including AJ&K and their nominated 50 branch classrooms. The project will be funded by Chinese Government under "Socio-Economic Development under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)".



a. Objectives of Project

The main objective of the project is to modernise the classrooms, improve accessibility of students from one location to the best teachers located at another place. Overcome the limitation of physical distances and develop online and offline materials and assessment system. These objectives are defined as multifold benefits to overall education system of the country, the system embodying interactive, collaborative, distance, and smart learning approaches as well as assessment environment.



b. Smart Classrooms Setup (Interactive Learning)

Establishment of classroom tools and extending the real classroom experience to multiple sub-campuses, affiliated/constituent colleges in 50 main places and 50 branches over PERN through immersive and intelligent video conferencing technologies, i.e., Interactive Digital Boards, auto tracking cameras, auto recording and content development, scheduling etc. The smart classroom sub-components include main classroom and sub-classroom. The main classroom (teacher classroom) will be fully equipped with audio/video tracking and recording technologies whereas the branch classrooms will only have the necessary audio/video tools.



c. Project Current Status



Province/Region	Total Classrooms	Deployment Completed
AJK	6	6
Federal	12	12
GB	2	2
KPK	16	16
Punjab	33	33
Sindh	21	21
Balochistan	10	10
Grant Total	**100**	**100**

5. Higher Education TV Channel

HEC, leading the transformation of education through technology, has launched an initiative to establish a Higher Education TV (EduTV) channel. This channel aims to enhance the higher education culture and provide educational counseling services to the citizens of Pakistan. It has been observed that, currently, TV channels in Pakistan

operate with diverse focuses, covering nearly all aspects of life except education--particularly higher education -- hindering the development of a knowledge-based society.





HEC EduTV is a web-based educational television platform. This initiative was launched in response to the increasing penetration of 3G/4G services, making a web-based platform an effective medium to reach a broader audience.

Under MoUs signed with five media and mass communication universities including Riphah International University, Sindh Madressahtul Islam University, Lahore Garrison University, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology, and the University of Gujrat, several programmes are broadcast daily on EduTV which include Chairman Online, E-Kachehri, HEC Scholarship Guide, Degree Attestation Guide, and Microsoft Trainings etc.

The detail of different programmes is provided in below table:

Higher Education TV Session Statistical Report

S.No.	Categories	Programmes
1	Chairman HEC Online	14
2	Live Programme from Media and Mass Communication Universities	79
3	E-Kachehries	24
4	Live Training Sessions	29
5	Live HEC Scholarship Guide	23
6	Live Seminar/Conferences	26
7	Live Competitions	34
8	Students/Professors/Scholars Live	19
	Total	248



Academics
Division

Introduction

Academics Division plays a pivotal role in shaping the academic landscape of higher education in Pakistan by formulating policies, frameworks, and standards that govern academic programmes, curricula, and teaching methodologies across universities and higher education institutions. This division ensures that academic programmes are in line with the National Qualification Framework, fostering national harmony and integrity through a unified educational approach.

Academics Division has been assigned various features of higher education academic matters, including guiding university Academic Councils, appointment of Distinguished National Professors, Best University Teacher Award, nominations for Pakistan Civil Awards, Pakistan University Debating Contest, revision of curricula and other allied matters. Academics Division is continuously endeavouring to develop and uplift the faculty and promote co-curricular activities for students in the higher education institutions (HEIs) of Pakistan through its round the year tasks. These tasks not only recognise the university faculty, but also bring improvement in quality of pedagogy and engage university level students in co-curricular activities.

I. Best University Teacher Award (BUTA) 2023

The Best University Teacher Award, an activity caried out by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) since 2003, is a prestigious honour bestowed annually upon exceptional university educators across three distinct categories: Social Sciences and Humanities, Physical Sciences and Engineering, and Life Sciences and Medical. This esteemed award recognises not only the outstanding dedication of teachers but also aims to inspire them to further enhance their pedagogical skills and innovative teaching methods. Celebrating excellence in teaching, the award highlights educators' significant contributions to both academic and student development.

The award recipients are meticulously selected based on their unwavering commitment to educational leadership, the profound impact they have on student learning, and their pivotal role in advancing their respective fields. This recognition goes beyond celebrating individual achievements. It serves as a beacon of inspiration, encouraging educators across the nation to strive for excellence in their teaching careers. Ultimately, the award plays a crucial role in elevating the quality of higher education in Pakistan.

Since 2003, HEC has conferred this prestigious award on 570 distinguished educators. This year, after a rigorous three-tier evaluation process, the winners were announced. Ms. Bibi Ruqia from Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar, Dr. Salima Ahsan Tejani from Iqra University Karachi, and Dr. Ali Hassan Chugtai from Gandhara University Peshawar have been honoured with the Best University Teacher Awards 2023 in their respective categories. Each of the winners received a certificate and a cash prize of Rs. 1 million, presented by Chairman HEC Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed.

II. Civil Award

Pakistan Civil Awards are the highest civilian honours conferred by the Government of Pakistan, recognising individuals who have made extraordinary contributions across various fields, including literature, arts, science, engineering, and social work. These prestigious awards, such as Hilal-e-Imtiaz, Sitara-e-Imtiaz, Pride of Performance, and Tamgha-i-Imtiaz symbolise the nation's appreciation for excellence and dedication. Announced on Independence Day (14 August) and conferred annually on Pakistan Day (23 March), the awards celebrate the achievements of those who have made a lasting impact on society through their exceptional work.

The recipients of Pakistan Civil Awards are selected through a rigorous and transparent process that evaluates their influence, commitment, and remarkable accomplishments in their respective domains. These honours not only acknowledge individual excellence but also inspire the nation by highlighting the significance of service, innovation, and leadership in the pursuit of national progress.

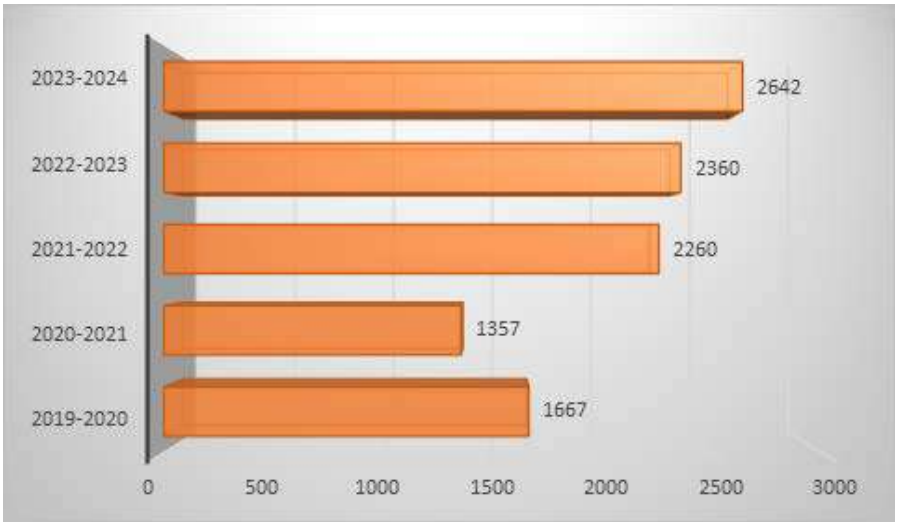
This year, the Vice Chancellors of HEIs submitted nominations to the Higher Education Commission (HEC), emphasising academic distinction while ensuring the highest standards of merit. Among the distinguished recipients of the 2023 Civil Awards are Ms. Sadia Rashid, President of Hamdard University Karachi, and Dr. Suliman Shahabuddin, President of Aga Khan University Karachi. Their recognition reflects the profound impact of their contributions to education and society at large.

III. No Objection Certificates to Foreign Students for Study in Pakistan

No Objection Certificate (NOC) issued by HEC is an essential document for foreign students seeking admission to Pakistani universities. This certificate serves as a formal endorsement, allowing international students to pursue their academic goals in Pakistan while ensuring that the chosen institution and programme meet the stringent standards set by HEC. The NOC process meticulously verifies the authenticity of the students' credentials and the legitimacy of university programmes, offering a robust layer of assurance for both the students and the educational institutions.

By issuing NOC, HEC plays a vital role in maintaining the integrity and quality of higher education in Pakistan. It also facilitates a smooth transition for foreign students into the country's academic environment, making their journey towards academic success more seamless. Moreover, NOC is processed specifically for visa purposes, with HEC granting it under the intimation to the Ministry of Interior.

During the academic year 2023-24, HEC processed and issued approximately 2,642 NOCs to foreign students from across the globe. This significant number reflects the growing interest in Pakistan's higher education system and the HEC's commitment to maintaining high standards and transparency in the admission process.



Last Five Years Details of NOCs Issued to Foreign Students

IV. Pakistan University Debating Championship (PUDC) 2023-24

Academics Division successfully organised the annual Pakistan University Debating Championship Competition in both English and Urdu on a parliamentary debating style. This prestigious national level event began with Regional Rounds held across five regions: Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, and Quetta. Each participating university fielded a team of three members, competing fiercely in their respective regions. The winning teams from each region then advanced to the highly anticipated National Round, which took place in Islamabad in May 2024.

In the Urdu category, the University of Punjab, Lahore secured the first prize, while the University of Balochistan, Quetta got second position and Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences, Jamshoro obtained third position . Meanwhile, in the English category, the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad emerged victorious, securing the first position, with the University of Balochistan, Quetta securing second position and Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro third position.



The awards for the top three teams in both categories were presented by Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, who commended the students for their outstanding performances and em-

phasised the importance of such events in fostering critical thinking and communication skills among university students across Pakistan.



Chairman HEC Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed is giving cash prize and trophy to the students of University of the Punjab, Lahore for winning the Urdu Debating Championship.

V. Mobility Grants for Exchange of Pakistani & UK Students

HEC and the British Council have approved mobility grants for Pakistani and UK universities under the "International Mobility" component of the Pak-UK Education Gateway project. This initiative is designed to enhance student mobility between the two countries while fostering stronger institutional partnerships and research collaborations.

Under this initiative, four student mobility partnership proposals from Pakistani and UK universities have been successfully executed. These collaborations include partnerships between Sukkur IBA University and the University of Sussex; the University of Central Punjab (UCP) and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan); Lahore College for Women University and Bolton University; and a consortium led by National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST) and comprising Air University, NED Karachi, IBA Karachi, and PAF-IAST, with Coventry University.

During the review period, 19 UK and 24 Pakistani students, along with two UK and three Pakistani university staff members, participated in these mobility exchanges. These visits offered students at partner universities an invaluable opportunity to share knowledge, enhance their research practices, improve thesis writing skills, and explore advancements in their respective fields of study. Additionally, these partnerships have laid the groundwork for future long- and short-term collaborations in academia and research.

VI. Development of Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) for Pakistan

The Government of Pakistan through HEC and the UK Government through British

Council have jointly funded the prestigious Pak-UK Education Gateway project, designed to strengthen partnerships between the higher education sectors of both nations. One of the flagship initiatives of this project is the development of a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) for Pakistan, modeled after the UK's successful approach. The TEF aims to evaluate the quality of teaching at universities and colleges, focusing on how well institutions ensure exceptional outcomes for students in terms of graduate employability and further studies. It will assess key areas that matter most to students, such as teaching quality, learning experiences, and student success.

To spearhead this initiative, the country's top educators, including nominees and winners of the Best University Teacher Award (BUTA), have been engaged to collaborate with a UK-based consultancy. During the year, proposals were invited from leading UK consultancy firms and consortiums to work alongside Pakistani faculty on the development of this framework. An expert committee, comprising members from both HEC and the British Council, carefully reviewed and selected the consultant based on rigorous criteria.

The joint efforts of Pakistani educators and the UK consultant are set to commence in September 2024, with the TEF development projected to be completed by June 2025. This groundbreaking endeavour is expected to pave the way for improved teaching standards and enhanced student outcomes across Pakistan's higher education landscape.

CURRICULUM
DIVISION

I. National Curriculum Review Committee

In line with Clause 10 (V) of HEC Ordinance 2002, HEC Curriculum Division has been developing and revising the curricula through National Curriculum Review Committees (NCRCs) on periodic basis. From 2002-2022, HEC in collaboration with relevant councils has developed the curricula of over 150 disciplines and revised the same from time to time. During the last one year (July 2023 - June 2024), following NCRCs operated under Curriculum Division to develop/revise the scheme of studies and curricula for following undergraduate and graduate degree programmes;

i. Nursing
ii. Midwifery
iii. Roadmap for Teacher Education
iv. Higher Education Roadmap for *Deeni Asnad* Holders
v. Architecture
vi. Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT)
vii. Environmental Sciences
viii. Biotechnology
ix. Botany
x. Consultative Meeting on Entrepreneurship
xi. Consultative Meeting on Ethics
xii. Consultative Meeting on Quantitative Reasoning
xiii. Consultative Meeting on Civics
xiv. Consultative Meeting on Pakistan Studies

II. In addition, the following curricula were revised in collaboration with the councils concerned, viz. Pakistan Engineering Council and National Technology Council.

i. Industrial Engineering
ii. Mechanical Engineering
iii. Mechatronics Engineering
iv. Naval Architecture Engineering
v. Metallurgy & Materials Engineering
vi. Mining Engineering
vii. Petroleum and Gas Engineering

III. Centralised Test for Computer Science & Information Technology Graduates

Curriculum Division arranged consultative meetings with Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) and Ministry of IT on Prime Minster's directives regarding efforts for increasing ICT exports of the country. As per directions, Curriculum Division successfully conducted Computer-based Centralised Test for Computer Science (CS) and Information Technology (IT) graduates in January 2024 in 27 cities of Pakistan in collaboration with Virtual University of Pakistan. A total of 9241 students from 198 universities participated in the test at 61 test centres. The data of 3731 students who qualified the test was shared with PSEB and Ministry of IT for apprenticeship in IT companies, including

IT exporters in Pakistan, to acquire hands-on experience on real-time projects. Upon successful completion of the co-opted programme, the credentials of the candidates with recommendations shall be placed on PSEB and P@SHA portal for access of large pool of IT companies, leading to job offers.

IV. Special Investment Facilitation Council

Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) held the 5th Executive Committee meeting in September 2023 wherein, HEC was tasked regarding HR Development Plan in Mines and Minerals Sector of Pakistan in consultation with Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, NAVTEC and provinces. In this regard, Curriculum Division organised/participated in the following meetings for HR Development Plan and gathered data from different stakeholders. The same was presented to the authorities.

- HEC Technical Committee for HR Skillset Gap Analysis in Mines and Minerals Secto' held in February 2024 at HEC Secretariat.
- A meeting for HR Development Plan for Minerals and Mines Sector held in February 2024 at OGDCL Head Office, Blue Area, Islamabad.
- Consultative meeting on HR Development Plan in Mines and Minerals Sector of Pakistan was held in June 2024 at HEC which was attended by all the stakeholders working in the mines and minerals sector of Pakistan, including faculty members of Mining Engineering and Earth Science Disciplines.

As desired by the SIFC, a detailed report is prepared in consultation with relevant stakeholders from industry. The same shall be presented to the Apex Committee of SIFC in due course of time.

V. Higher Education Pathways and Roadmap for *Deeni Asnad* Holders

Recognising the importance of aligning Higher Education Roadmap for *Deeni Asnad* holders with National Qualification Framework (NQF) and the existing equivalence procedure for the students of *Deeni Madaris*, a series of consultative meetings was arranged at HEC by Curriculum Division with the coordination of Quality Assurance Division, Accreditation & Attestation Division, and Directorate General Religious Affairs, Islamabad in December 2023 and February 2024. After consultative meetings, a pathway and a roadmap for *Deeni Asnad* holders was developed, which provides different options to *Deeni Asnad* holders to obtain Associate Degrees, BS degrees, MS/MPhil and PhD degrees by fulfilling specific terms and conditions. The new roadmap shall allow *Deeni Asnad* holders to integrate with NQF at any desired point of madrassa education and consequently make them eligible for large pool of employment opportunities in the job market, which they were not entitled to before. The proposed roadmap has been checked and endorsed by A&A Division, Quality Assurance Division, and Directorate General of Religious Education, Government of Pakistan. Once approved by Academic Committee of the Commission, the same will be notified.

VI. Orientation Sessions for Undergraduate Education Policy (V 1.1)

Curriculum Division revised Undergraduate Education Policy, which was approved by

Commission for implementation by all HEIs in the country w.e.f fall 2023. In this regard, Curriculum Division has organised a series of countrywide orientation sessions for universities located in Islamabad/Rawalpindi, Balochistan, Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on August 23, 2023, August 31, 2023, September 6-9, 2023, November 07-09, 2023 and February 27-28 2024 respectively.

VII. Universities Ranking Data 2023

Curriculum Division coordinated with the HEC Higher Education Data Repository regarding scrutiny of data for Universities Ranking 2023. Curriculum Division reviewed 1138 sheets of eight parameters of Academic Division in January-February 2024.

VIII. Prime Minister's Youth Programme & Commonwealth Secretariat IT Skills Programme

Curriculum Division has forwarded 766 nominations to Prime Minister Office Islamabad that was received from public and private sector universities/degree awarding institutions of Pakistan for 200 online IT courses. The online IT courses will upgrade the skill level of BS students of last semester of Software Engineering, Computer Science/IT, Electrical Engineering, Telecom, and Networking Engineering.

IX. Court Cases/PMDU and CRM Complaints

- Curriculum Division resolved 114 complaints on different academic matters on CRM
- Resolved over 433 Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (PMDU) complaints during the period under review

X. Relevancy Cases

- A total of 240 cases are processed for subject relevancy

Media Gallery

Consultative Meeting on HR Development Plan in Mines and Mineral Sector of Pakistan on 6 June 2024 in HEC Islamabad



Centralised Test for Computer Science and IT Graduates Conducted in 27 Cities of Pakistan



Meeting with SIFC, PSEB and MOITT regarding launch of Bootcamp (IT) in universities on September 15, 2023





NCRC Architecture held on September 4-5, 2023 at HEC Regional Centre Karachi





Orientation sessions on Undergraduate Education Policy (V 1.1) for universities based in Balochistan region on August 31, 2023







Orientation sessions on Undergraduate Education Policy (V 1.1) for universities based in Islamabad/Rawalpindi on August 23, 2023





NCRC Nursing & Midwifery on July 6-7, 2023





Attestation & Accreditation

Introduction

The Attestation and Accreditation (A&A) Division comprises of the following Sections.

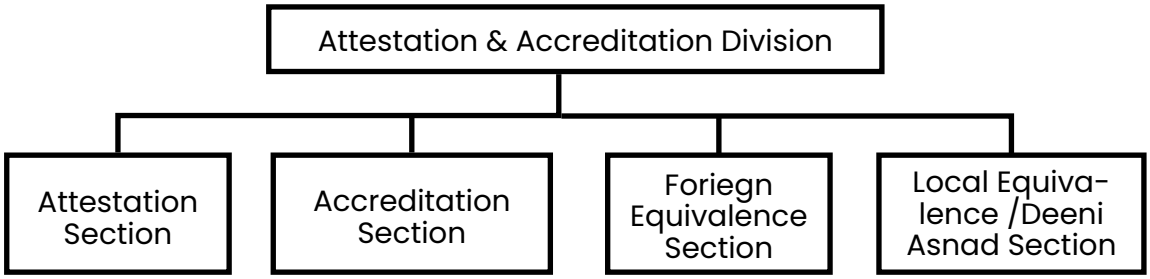
(i) Attestation Section

(ii) Accreditation Section

(iii) Foreign Equivalence Section

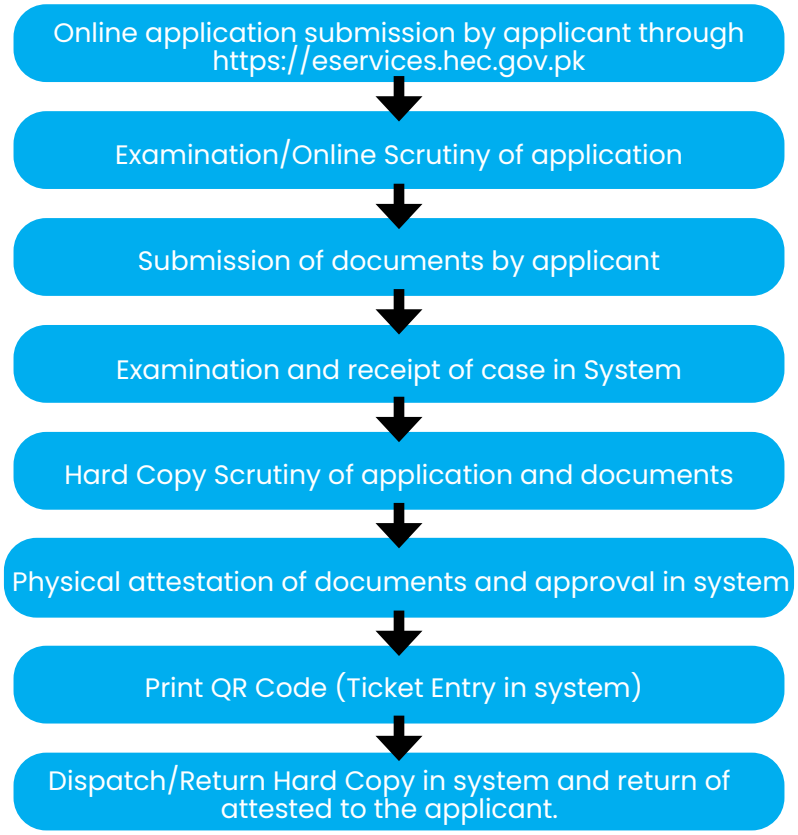
(iv) Local Equivalence / Deeni Asnaad Section

A&A Division Organogram



Attestation Section

Attestation Process Flow



Degree Attestation System (DAS)

i- To facilitate the applicants, Higher Education Commission (HEC) developed a comprehensive, robust, secure, and user-friendly online Degree Attestation System (DAS) which has been operational since May 29, 2017.

ii- DAS is integrated with NADRA for real time verification of applicants.

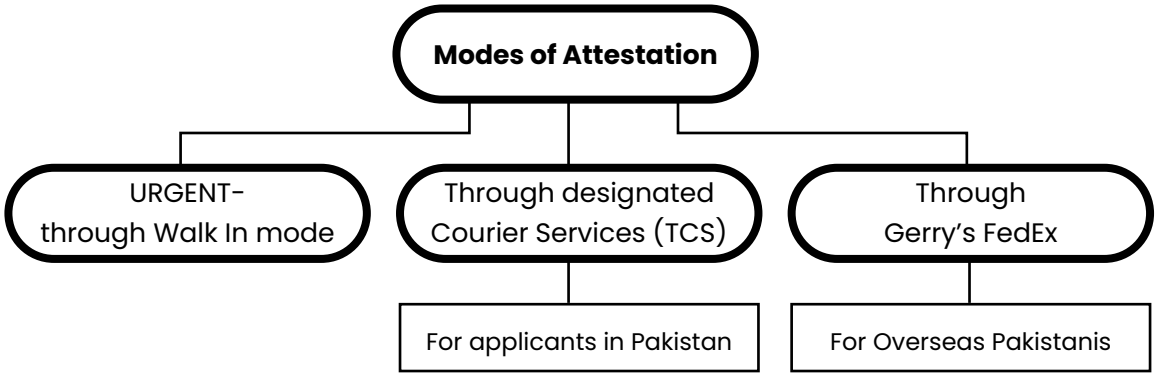
iii- DAS is also linked with Pakistan Qualification Register (PQR) which is a database containing details of recognized universities, their campuses, departments, affiliated colleges, degree programs with exact nomenclature of degrees, level of qualification etc. Applicants can apply online and reserve time slots from their homes for attestation of their educational documents (in case of walk-in urgent) or send their documents for attestation through designated courier company.

iv- A new and user-friendly version of DAS and Mobile Application are also introduced for facilitation of applicants.

v- 1-link facility has been added to the system to facilitate the attestation seekers to make payment online.

Modes of Attestation

Attestation of educational documents can be done through any of the following modes:



Re-Verification of Attested Documents

i- HEC has extended access of HEC's verification database to some organisations including Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Embassies, Education Evaluation Agencies etc. to check and verify the attestation detail in without referring the cases to HEC. This service saves the time and money of those applicants who apply for scholarships, admissions, jobs and immigration etc.

ii- HEC made public a verification link on March 31, 2023, to check and verify the attestation detail without referring the cases to HEC.

Achievements of Attestation Section in FY 2023-24

HEC attested a total number of 300,636 documents at its Secretariat during the year.

Attestation (Islamabad): 300,636

Original Documents: 214984

Photocopies: 85652

Accreditation Section

The detail of new universities/institutes/campuses established and other tasks including the working on different policies is elaborated below:

<table>
<tr><th>Major Tasks/Accomplishments</th><th>2023-24</th></tr>
<tr><td>Number of universities/DAIs Accredited</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th>Public</th><th>Private</th><th>Total</th></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>6</td><td>10</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Number of Campuses Accredited</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th>Public</th><th>Private</th><th>Total</th></tr>
<tr><td>06</td><td>05</td><td>11</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Miscellaneous Tasks</td><td>i. Business of National Assembly and Senate Standing Committees were handled in an appropriate manner.
ii. Successful Budget planning, preparation, reconciliation of funds allocated to Accreditation Section for inspections.
iii. Dealing large number of court cases, Federal Ombudsman, NAB and FIA cases pertaining this Section.
iv. Coordination with provincial governments on issues relating to Higher Education.
v. Maintaining the online lists of recognized universities/campuses/affiliated colleges/ Fake Universities/Institutions.
vi. As per HEC Affiliation Policy, an online Affiliation Portal is being maintained for collection of data of affiliated colleges.</td></tr>
</table>

The status of the policies being formulated/revised by Accreditation Section (A&A) is mentioned below:

S.No	Title of policy	Status
1	HEC Institutional Affiliation Policy 2024	HEC has devised said Policy to make certain improvements in the existing criteria to cope with the emerging needs and to ensure the quality of higher education at affiliated colleges. The Policy having certain key parameters in terms of qualified faculty, academic and allied facilities to enhance the quality of education and promote socio-economic development in the country.

Monitoring the advertisements regarding admissions/ programs offered by the HEIs and issuance of press on regular basis regarding illegal institutes/ campuses for awareness of public in large (as per instructions of competent authority).

1. The Accreditation Section (A&A) is performing this activity with the coordination of Media and Publication section of HEC. The public alerts are being published time to time and a list of Fake, Illegal, Unlawful and Unrecognized Institutions is being maintained at HEC website at link: Universities Illegal/Fake Universities & Campuses (hec.gov.pk).
2. Recently a new link of Unaccredited Institutions (those institutions whose Act passed by the relevant assemblies but not accredited by HEC) has been created at HEC website for public awareness: Universities Unaccredited Institutions (hec.gov.pk).

Foreign Equivalence Section

Foreign Equivalence Section launched paperless online application portal at https://eservices.hec.gov.pk

HEC has launched seamless online form at https://eservices.hec.gov.pk. The significant features of the system are:

i. There is no need to send hardcopy documents.
ii. Fee can be paid online using 1Link online payment facility via mobile banking.
iii. Letter issued via this system is digitally signed embedded with QR code and there is no need to get it attested from HEC Section required by employers, embassies or Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Along with this, a verification portal has also been launched by HEC, i.e., https://eservices.hec.gov.pk/#/degree-verification/main where employers, admitting agencies and general public can verify the "Attestation of degrees" and the Equivalence Letters issued.

During the year, the Section issued 3507 letters for foreign degrees equivalence.

Local Equivalence and Deeni Asnaad Section

- HEC has launched a completely paperless online system for equivalence of degrees awarded by the Pakistani universities. Applicants are not required to submit hard copies of their documents or to visit HEC for equivalence purpose.
- 1-link facility has been added in the system to facilitate the applicants to make payment online who want to get their equivalence certificates from HEC.
- The detail of Equivalence cases processed during the FY 2022-2023 is as under:

1.	Equivalence of Deeni Asnaad	8696
2.	Equivalence of Pakistani Degrees	5779

Planning &
Development Division

Public Sector Development Programme

In order to achieve the goals and targets set for the higher education sector mainly with respect to having increased access to higher education, improved quality of teaching and research, and increased capacity of faculty, Higher Education Commission (HEC) every year prioritises the programmes and projectswhich are to be funded through Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). HEC plans to continue reforms that are in line with Government of Pakistan's Vision 2025 mainly to implement a process of developing human capital and to take higher education opportunities at the district level throughout the country.

During FY 2023-24, an amount of Rs. 69.7 billion was initially allocated for execution of 169 development projects (139 ongoing and 30 new projects including Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme) of universities/HEC. Of this amount, Rs. 46.646 billion (which is 66% of the budget) were released to meet expenditure against ongoing projects for activities like construction of new academic buildings, strengthening of ICT infrastructure, faculty development, procurement of laboratory equipment and other approved components. In FY 2023-24, funding to 15 development projects was completed, while 16 new projects with total cost of Rs. 45 billion were initiated. Summary is given as under:

Rs. In Billion

Sr #	Descriptions	No. of Projects	Total Cost	Cumulative Exp. Upto June, 2023	Throw-forward as on 1st July, 2023	PSDP Allocation 2023-24		Total Releases
						Original	Revised	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	**Ongoing Schemes**							
i	Local	137	329.139	128.607	200.532	51.750	41.224	41.224
ii	Foreign Aid	2	24.146	3.920	20.225	1.050	3.863	3.863
	Total	**139**	**353.284**	**132.527**	**220.757**	**52.800**	**45.087**	**45.087**
B	**New Schemes**							
i	New Schemes	29	84.859	-	84.859	6.900	1.550	1.550
	Total (A+B)	**168**	**438.144**	**132.527**	**305.616**	**59.700**	**46.636**	**46.636**
	Laptop Scheme	1	16.801	-	16.801	10.000	-	-
	G Total	**169**	**454.945**	**132.527**	**322.418**	**69.700**	**46.636**	**46.636**

The funds were disbursed in the following manner: -

- Rs. 27.461 billion were disbursed to 106 projects of universities mainly for infrastructure development and allied facilities.
- Rs. 9.908 billion were released to 17 ongoing projects of Human Resource Development including foreign and local scholarships.
- Rs. 3.854 billion were released to other 14 national level projects including six dif-

ferent Prime Minister's initiatives.

- Similarly, Rs. 3.863 billion were made available for rupee cover against two foreign aided projects.
- Rs. 1.550 billion were disbursed to 16 new projects and 14 projects remained un-funded.
- Following major development initiatives were launched:
- 5000 scholarships for Balochistan and erstwhile FATA students (Phase-III).
- Allama Muhammad Iqbal Scholarships for Afghan National Students (Phase III)
- PM's Laptop Scheme
- Strengthening of Lab facilities in five leading Engineering universities (UET Peshawar, Taxila, Lahore, Khuzdar & NED Karachi)
- Establishment of Institute of Science & Technology, Bahawalpur
- Establishment of China-Pakistan Joint Research Centre (CPJR) on Earth Sciences, QAU, Islamabad
- Establishment of NUTECH Railway Engineering Technologies and Skills School (NURETSS) at National University of Technology (NUTECH) Main Campus

Preparation of Budget Estimates FY 2024-25:

During FY 2023-24, the budget estimates for the upcoming fiscal year 2024-25 PSDP was prepared and approved by the parliament. Summary is given as under:

Rs. In billion

Sr#	Descriptions	No. of Projects	Total Cost	Cumulative Expenditure upto June, 2024	Throw-Forward as on 1st July, 2024	PSDP Allocation FY 2024-25
A. Ongoing Schemes						
I	Local	137	325.440	136.576	188.863	39.177
Ii	F. Aid	1	4.070	0.205	3.865	0.500
	Total (A)	**138**	**329.510**	**136.781**	**192.728**	**39.677**
B. New Schemes						
I	Local	17	83.100	0.020	83.080	13.610
Ii	F. Aid	4	35.201	7.783	27.418	7.828
	Total (B)	**21**	**118.301**	**7.803**	**110.498**	**21.438**
	G-Total	**159**	**447.811**	**144.584**	**303.226**	**61.115**

FINANCE DIVISION

Introduction

Higher Education Commission (HEC) as per its mandate submits to the Federal Government recurring demand of public sector universities/higher education institutions (HEIs) and then allocates grant to institutions based on the funding policy approved by HEC's governing body, the Commission. The recurring demand is assessed and rationalised by a joint assessment committee comprising senior representatives of HEC, Ministry of Finance, and provincial Higher Education and Finance Departments. Following are the key components of HEC's funding formula:

- Base Grant (65%) is distributed based on students' enrolmentNeed Grant (20%) is distributed based on regional/locational backwardnessPerformance Grant (15%) is distributed based on quality and research parameters

In addition to distribution of bulk grant, HEC Finance Division is also responsible for the following functions:

i. Submit to the Commission for approval the (a) annual recurring BEs of federal grant to universities and the HEC Secretariat

ii. Budget foreign exchange requirements of different development projects and recurring programmes, and maintain close liaison with the State Bank of Pakistan and Ministry of Finance for rupee cover and remit foreign currency to Pakistani scholars studying abroad under scholarship programmes

iii. Follow up with the Finance Division the quarterly releases of recurring grant to universities and the HEC Secretariat and ensure disbursement of the development grants on the recommendation of the HEC Planning & Development/Monitoring & Evaluatio Divisions and the approval of PAO

iv. Extend technical advice on various proposals received from the competent authority and/or various HEC Divisions.

v. Issue guidelines to the universities/HEIs time to time as per approval of the competent authority for maintaining good financial management and controlsManage financial data of public sector universities including the federal and provincial grants details. Also, prepare reports and briefs on financial issues of universities/HEIs as and when needed by the HEC authority and/or government offices.

vi. Ensure HEC representation on the Finance & Planning Committee (F&PC) meetings of the universities (as per requirement under their laws)Maintain close liaison with Ministry of Finance, AGPR and Auditor General of Pakistan Office to facilitate higher education sector in all financial and ancillary mattersProcess and record all financial transactions of all accountsManage HEC Investment portfolio through Investment Committee and maintain all operations of accounts in receipts and expenditures

The aforesaid tasks are delivered by the Finance Division through its three Sections.

Achievements Report FY 2023-24

1. Recurring Demand, Allocation and Releases to Universities in FY 2023-24

- For the FY 2023-24, the Joint Assessment Committee assessed and rationalized the annual recurring budget requirement at an outlay of Rs. 120.086 billion (Rs. 118.286 billion for universities and HEC national programmes and Rs. 1.8 billion for the HEC Secretariat). Accordingly, demand was submitted to the federal government for final allocation and the government allocated Rs. 65 billion for the universities and Rs. 1.300 billion for the HEC Secretariat.
- It is important to note that allocation-2023-24 for universities was kept stagnant at the level of Rs. 65 billion (stagnancy continued since 2016-17) and with following added instructions whereas Rs. 275 million increase was granted to the HEC Secretariat:
    a. *Out of the above (allocated) Grant-in-Aid, priority for allocation of funds may be given to the Federal Government public sector universities, centres, and institutes.*
    b. *Regarding other public sector universities, provincial governments may be approached to enhance their shares to meet the expenditures of respective universities.*
    c. *HEC may release funds to public sector universities to meet their budgetary shortfall for a limited period as non-recurring expenditure.*
- In compliance to the Finance Divisions' instructions, HEC after approval of the Commission in its urgent meeting submitted NIS with (i) 5% increase in allocation to the federal universities/HEIs, (ii) maintaining provincial allocation at previous FY level, and (iii) slight reduction in allocation of the HEC national programmes owing to meeting the additional impact of 5% increase in federal universities' grant. Upon approval of NIS by the federal government, grant was released as per allocation to the approved cost centres on quarterly basis.
- During FY 2023-24, HEC also received the annual committed Technical Supplementary Grant of Rs. 3.820 billion under World Bank-funded HEDP project signed by Government of Pakistan in June 2019 with International Development Association (IDA) as a soft loan of US$ 400 million. Grant was utilised by HEC (as executing agency) to meet the annual DLIs set in the agreement. It is important to highlight that the recurring component of the project has been closed in FY 2023-24.
- Compared to stagnancy in funding, cost of education has grown immensely due to unprecedented surge in inflation, devaluation of currency and increase in salaries by the federal and provincial governments that brought huge budgetary deficits in most of the public universities. The deficits though could be mitigated by the public sector HEIs through drastic increase in student fee, however, same may not be considered in view of the serious repercussions of making HE out of reach of low and middle-income families. The current situation of unprecedented budgetary shortfall has made it impossible for universities to sustain their operations and thus many universities are unable to pay full salaries and pension to their employees. As a result, universities are facing protests and disruption in academic activities.

2. Additional Financial Support to Universities in FY 2023-24

In addition to regular grant-in-aid, HEC also provided, in FY 2023-24, additional funding support to few universities/HEIs facing serious financial constraints, and impact thereon was covered under financial autonomy -- Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLI) -- of Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project. The additional funding was provided in lieu of solarisation of campuses and for revenue generation from intellectual sources. Important is to highlight that solarisation funding was provided on matching grant basis whereas revenue generation grant was released upon submission and approval of universities' proposals feasible for income generation.

3. Strategic Initiatives

I. Implementation of Financial Reform Guidelines in Universities: HEC through its numerous policy communications emphasized on implementation of the guidelines for improvement in financial management and controls that primarily include:

a. Strict compliance of BPS package (prescribed by the respective government)Maintaining Pension Fund of university as per annual actuarial study report.

b. Faculty-to-student and faculty-to-staff ratios prescribed by HEC be adhered in true spiritReducing reliance on public funding by improving institutional cost efficiency, diversification of funding sources such as collaboration with industry, entrepreneurial activities, optimal Fund Management (Endowment/Reserve Funds), alumni contribution/fund raising, offering professional courses, testing and consultancy, etc.

c. Implementation of Double Entry Accounting System (DEAS) and deployment of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution. Pursuant to HEC efforts, 55 HEIs have implemented DEAS

d. Appointment of a regular professional on key statutory position of the TreasurerEstablishment of endowment funds and framing rules for its operationalization after approval of the statutory bodies

II. Inclusion of HEC Representation in Finance & Planning Committees of all the Federally Funded HEIs: HEC by virtue of laws (Act/Ordinance) is Member of the Finance & Planning Committee (FPC) of many universities, however, there do exist few federally funded universities whereby HEC has no representation by virtue of law. Accordingly, HEC in pursuance of requirement under Section-16 of its Ordinance and Section-07(1)(b) of the Financial Management and Powers of PAOs Regulations 2021, requested universities to include HEC in FPC composition as voting Member. Pursuant to persistent efforts and follow-ups, HEC is now formal Member of FPC meetings of all the federally funded universities/HEIs.

III. Constitution of Finance Planning Forums in Federally Funded National Research Centres: The federally chartered Research Centres established through Federal Acts, Presidential Orders or Federal Protocol (inter-countries agreements) are governed through their Board of Governors (BOG) however, these institutions do not have FPC forums. Realizing importance of the role of Finance & Planning Committee in maintaining institutional financial discipline and governance, HEC through its policy communications advised constitution of FPC forums that accordingly have been constituted and operational in all the federally funded research centres.

4. Tenure Track System Operations

Regarding Tenure Track System, continuous efforts remained underway to streamline operations and ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the system. Key interventions are as under:

- HEC share in TTS salary was released against 4,087 faculty members.
- Annual Adjustment in FY 2023-24 for promotion, resignation, leave without pay cases was calculated and as per practice has been settled in annual recurring allocation of respective universities in FY 2024-25.
- As per approved TTS funding policy, HEC funding is not admissible against the TTS faculty cases that become time-barred (exceeding maximum prescribed length of tenure). Accordingly, universities on potential time-barred cases were sensitised in advance through formal communications and advised to complete promotion process within their maximum prescribed length of tenure and submit declaration to HEC.
- In consideration of implementation of provisions of the approved TTS Statues and Funding Policy, universities vide formal communication were issued clarification that the financial impact of arrears of backdated promotions and/or advance increments is covered by HEC to the extent of current financial year only.
- Queries of universities and court cases on TTS-related matters received from HEC Litigation Section were responded to in the light of HEC-approved TTS Model Statutes.

5. Meetings Attended and Organized during FY 2023-24

- The 22nd HEC Finance & Planning Committee meeting was convened on August 8, 2023 wherein Actuals 2022-23 and BEs 2023-24 were recommended to the Commission in addition to adoption of federal government notifications for increase in salary and other benefits to BPS employees and creation of posts for regularization of contingent paid staff. The recommendations of the FPC were approved by the Commission in its meeting held on October 23, 2023.
- Meeting of Joint Budgetary Assessment Committee were convened during January-February 2024 in Islamabad, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta and Sukkur for review and assessment of budgetary demand for FY 2024-25.
- Review meetings for budget utilization were convened with all the HEC Divisions under convenorship of Executive Director HEC during each quarter of FY 2023-24.
- HEC through officers of its Finance Division was represented in the Finance Planning Committee meetings of the public and private Universities/HEIs.

6. SAP Related Interventions

HEC is managing financial transactions through SAP system having integrated modules of Finance/Accounts, HR, Assets Management & Development Projects. However, following interventions have been introduced in FY 2023-24:

- Online Cash Management System (CMS) has been employed to facilitate online payment transactions through HBL.
- In FY 2023-24 , HEC introduced sub-heads of most of the major budget heads on receipt as well as payment side to facilitate the cost-benefit analysis. Said intervention has improved the role of ERP system in decision making processes.

National Academy of Higher Education

Executive Summary

National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) is a national hub for capacity building and continuous professional development of teaching faculty and management of higher education institutions (HEIs) across Pakistan. NAHE is also striving for continuous capacity building of HEC employees towards their generic and customised professional development.

NAHE serves as a learning institution, promoting discourse and developing high-quality human capital in line with HEC Vision 2025. This annual report presents the initiatives, achievements, and other related activities conducted during the reporting year from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. During the fiscal year, NAHE organised a range of training programmes that reached 648 participants nationwide. These initiatives focused on various aspects essential for enhancing capacity within the higher education sector.

NAHE's vision and mission centres advancing academic and leadership skills, promoting skill development, and supporting research initiatives. This report underscores NAHE's dedication to aligning its efforts with HEC Vision.

Brief Highlights of the Year 2023-24

Professional Development Training Programmes for HEIs Faculty: NAHE trained 160 faculty members of public sector HEIs across Pakistan.

i. **Professional Development Training Programmes for HEC Employees:** As many as 96 participants benefited from different capacity-building initiatives, including:
   1. Professional Development Retreat for HEC Senior Management
   2. Training on Building High Performing Team
   3. Drivers Safety Education & Professional Grooming (Cohorts I & II)

ii. **HE Leadership Programme under Pakistan-UK Education Gateway – Cohort II:** 18 Vice Chancellors, one British Council and two HEC officials were sent to the United Kingdom for the HE Leadership Training Programme.

iii. **PhD Supervisors Capacity Building Programme (Phase II & III):** A total of 128 PhD Supervisors were trained under the Pak-UK Education Gateway in three cohorts (Phase II). Out of these 128 participants, 18 were further selected for UK-based training held by Coventry University in collaboration with British Council.

iv. **Women Leadership and Mentoring Programme (WEMP):** NAHE in collaboration with HEDP launched Women Empowerment and Mentoring Programme (WEMP) for the females working in HEC and in the HEIs of Pakistan. The programme aims to empower female employees in the universities by providing mentorship from senior leaders in higher education, helping them build net-

works, advocate for their interests, and advance their careers. This programme would also help foster leadership development and offering essential support for achieving a healthy work-life balance.

v. **Pre-Service National Faculty Development Programme for IPFP:** As many as 278 IPFP fellows were trained in 12 Cohorts. In this regard, 226 IPFP fellows out of 278 successfully acquired placements through the efforts and coordination of NAHE at different public sector universities in Pakistan. Chairman HEC enhanced their stipends from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 150,000 during their placement which created a very positive impact.

vi. **HEC Approved Tiered Professional Development Framework for HEIs Teachers and Management**: Another notable achievement was the development of a national framework for tier-wise professional training of teaching faculty and management of HEIs across Pakistan. In this regard, nine core training modules were successfully developed after an extensive process by seasoned and highly experienced academics for the Tier-1 higher education teaching faculty and management. A national roll-out plan for implementation of the training will embark on in collaboration with the Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) project in October of the coming fiscal year 2024-25 under the auspices of NAHE.

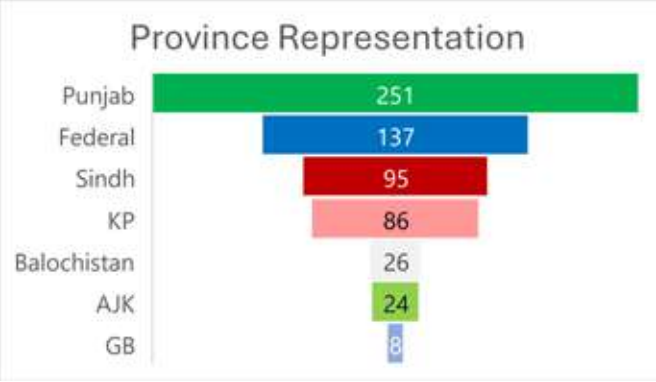
NAHE Achievements (2023-24) – Statistical Summary

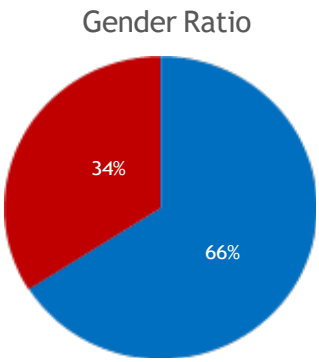
1	Professional Development Training Programmes for HEIs Faculty		
Sr.	**Training Title**	**Training Dates**	**Total Participants**
1	In-Service Regional Faculty Professional Development Programme (IRFPDP)	July 4-20, 2023	27
2	PhD Supervisors Capacity Building Program (Phase-2) Cohort-1	July 17-21, 2023	46
3	PhD Supervisors Capacity Building Program (Phase-2) Cohort-2	July 31-August-4, 2023	25
4	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Cohort V	August 1-17, 2023	25
5	PhD Supervisors Capacity Building Program (Phase-2) Cohort-3	August 7-11, 2023	57
6	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Cohort VI	Sep. 19 -October 5, 2023	27
7	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Batch-II Cohort VII	Oct. 24-Nov. 10, 2023	22
8	NFDP for Newly Inducted Faculty of Public sector HEIs	Nov. 13 -30, 2023	22
9	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Cohort VIII	Dec 4-20, 2023	24
10	NFDP for Newly Inducted Faculty Members of Public Sector HEIs of KPK	Dec. 6-21, 2023	22
11	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Cohort IX	Dec. 19, 2023 - Jan. 3, 2024	22
12	NFDP for Newly Inducted Faculty Members of Public Sector HEIs of Sindh	Dec. 26, 2023 – Jan. 11, 2024	23
13	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Cohort X	Jan. 16-29, 2024	25
14	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Cohort XI	Jan. 22 -Feb. 3, 2024	24
15	NFDP for Newly Inducted Faculty Members of Public Sector HEIs of Lahore	Jan. 17-Feb. 3, 2024	23
16	NFDP Cohort V for newly Inducted Faculty of Public Sector HEIs of Balochistan	Feb. 22 -March 8, 2024	19
17	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Cohort XII	Feb. 26 -March 8, 2024	7
18	PhD Supervisors' Capacity Building Program Phase-III	March 3-8, 2024	18

19	NFDP for Newly Inducted Faculty Members of Public Sector HEIs of Lahore	April 22 -May 9, 2024	24
20	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Batch V Cohort I	May 6-23, 2024	24
21	Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Batch V Cohort II	May 13-31, 2024	25
Sub Total - 1			531

2	**Professional Development Training Programmes for HEIs Management**		
Sr.	**Training Title**	**Training Dates**	**Total Participants**
22	UK Leadership Programme under Pakistan-UK Education Gateway	May 19 -27, 2024	21
Sub Total - 2			21

3	**Professional Development Training Programs for HEC Employees**		
Sr.	**Training Title**	**Training Dates**	**Total Participants**
23	Drivers Safety Education & Professional Grooming (Cohort-I)	16-Oct-23	30
24	Drivers Safety Education & Professional Grooming (Cohort-II)	17-Oct-23	31
25	Professional Development Retreat for HEC Senior Management	Dec. 15-17, 2023	15
26	Capacity Building Training Programme for HEC Employees	May 30-31, 2024	20
Sub Total - 3			96





GRAND TOTAL	**648**

Tier-I Training Module Development

The highlight of the year was successful completion of module development for tier-I Lecturers/Assistant Professors with up to seven years teaching experience in public sector HEIs. The committee meticulously crafted nine core modules, which had been formally handed over to NAHE for implementation.



Nine Core Modules

Teaching as a Profession	Academic Planning s Implementation by University Teachers	Psychological Wellbeing of Higher Education Teachers and Learners
Communication Skills for Higher Education Teaching	Technology Integrations in Higher Education Teaching	Research and Development
Higher Educational Administration and Management	Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education Teaching	Microteaching/Teaching Practicum at Higher Education





The opening and closing session of the workshop was chaired by Prof. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, Chairman HEC, and Prof Mehmood-Ul-Hassan Butt Program Coordinator HEDP respectively on June 6, 2024. They both commended the contributions of the

module developers and NAHE team in completing this national-level endeavour for the university teachers and management of Pakistan.

1. Professional Development Training Programmes for HEIs Faculty



Session on "Academic, Planning & Implementation" during National Faculty Development Programme at NAHE HEC Islamabad

National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) designed National Faculty Development Programme (NFDP) with a specific focus on enhancing the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA) of the faculty members of public sector HEIs of Pakistan. The main objective of the programme is to accelerate the transfer of essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes in three dimensions of a successful career as a faculty member, i.e., (1) teaching and learning, (2) applied research, and (3) professional practice.



Chairman HEC addressing the IPFP Fellows



National Faculty Development Programme (NFDP) Cohort-V at NAHE HEC, Islamabad



National Faculty Development Programme (NFDP) Cohort-I at NAHE HEC Islamabad



National Faculty Development Programme (NFDP) Cohort-II at HEC Regional Centre,

In-Service Faculty Development Programme (IFDP) under NAHE's Regional Outreach Initiative

National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) organized an in-service training programme for newly inducted faculty members of the Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam (SAU) under the NAHE's Regional Outreach Initiative at HEC Regional Centre, Karachi, to enhance the capacity of the faculty and to improve teaching practices, research, and academia-industry linkages. In this backdrop, the first batch of this outreach programme was organised from July 4-20, 2023, for newly inducted faculty of Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam at HEC Regional Centre Karachi. The opening ceremony of the said programme was held on July 4, 2023. Sindh Minister for Universities and Board Mr. Mohammad Ismail Rahoo was the chief guest of the opening ceremony. The opening session was also attended by local Vice Chancellors and other dignitaries.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Rahoo appreciated HEC's efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning. He emphasised that Pakistani HEIs should be providing research opportunities in the fields of farming and energy conservation, innovative data-driven farming, and food security, forecasting the factors to improve the country's crops.

The then Executive Director HEC, Dr. Shaista Sohail, appreciated NAHE for this initiative. She stressed the importance of professional development for teachers and how it is beneficial for them to unleash the potential of their students. She highlighted the role of various educational disciplines in overcoming the existing environmental as well as financial challenges facing the country.

Managing Director NAHE Ms. Noor Amna Malik congratulated the participants on their selection for the training. She highlighted the importance of this programme and advised the participants to gain maximum benefits from this unique and valuable opportunity. She guided the audience about various other initiatives taken by NAHE for capacity building of HEIs faculty and administration at different stages of their careers.

Vice Chancellor SAU Tandojam Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri was also present on the occasion. He appreciated NAHE for organising the training programme for newly inducted faculty members of Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam. He also advised the participants to get maximum benefit from the unique opportunity.





A total of 30 newly inducted regular faculty members of SAU, Tandojam attended this workshop and gained a higher education teaching certificate. Senior Minister Sindh Government Mr. Nisar Khoro graced the closing ceremony as chief guest. He appreci-

ated the efforts of HEC in this endeavour and urged the certification recipient teachers to apply their learning with the spirit of national integration.









Faculty Professional Development Programme Achievements FY 2023-24

#	Programme	Date		Venue	No. of Participants Trained
		From	To		
1	In-Service Regional Faculty Professional Development Programme at Doorstep	July 4, 2023	July 20, 2023	HEC Regional Centre, Karachi	27
2	National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of Federal, AJK HEIs (Cohort-I)	November 13, 2023	November 30, 2023	NAHE, HEC Islamabad	22
3	National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of KPK HEIs (Cohort-II)	Decem-ber 6, 2023	Decem-ber 22, 2023	HEC Regional Centre, Pesha-war	22
4	National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of Sindh HEIs (Cohort-III)	Decem-ber 26, 2023	January 12, 2024	HEC Regional Centre, Karachi	23
5	National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of Punjab HEIs (Cohort-IV)	January 17, 2024	February 3, 2024	HEC Regional Centre, Lahore	23
6	National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of Balochistan HEIs (Cohort-V)	February 22, 2024	March 8, 2024	NAHE, HEC Islamabad	19
7	National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of HEIs of Pakistan (Cohort-VI)	April 22, 2024	May 9, 2024	HEC Regional Centre, Lahore	24
Total					**160**

TESTIMONIALS	
 ***Mr. Rashid Hussain*** *National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of Sindh HEIs (Cohort-III)* *Dec. 26 – Jan. 12, 2023* *HEC RC Karachi*	**This was a "very interactive session with appropriate resource use. The quality of delivery was high, and the session was very helpful."**
 ***Syed Ali Shan*** *National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of Sindh HEIs (Cohort-III)* *Dec. 26 – Jan. 12, 2023* *HEC RC Karachi*	**It was a "highly effective module on leadership styles. The session was interactive, and the content was engaging and relevant. Excellent presentation."**
 ***Dr. Asma Noureen*** *National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of Punjab HEIs (Cohort-IV)* *Jan. 17 – Feb. 3, 2024* *HEC RC Lahore*	**"The training was excellent, well-organised, and met all expectations. The learning environment and resources were very good."**
 **Mr. Muhammad Khushnood Ashraf** *National Faculty Development Programme for newly inducted faculty members of Punjab HEIs (Cohort-IV)* *Jan. 17 – Feb. 3, 2024* *HEC RC Lahore*	**"The module was well-organised, and the teaching style was energetic. The learning environment was conducive, with relevant and well-arranged resources."**

2. Professional Development Training Programmes for HEC Employees

A total of 96 participants benefited from different capacity-building initiatives, including:

1) Professional Development Retreat for HEC Senior Management
2) Training on Building High Performing Team
3) Drivers Safety Education & Professional Grooming (Cohorts I & II)

A few snapshots of various workshops:



Professional Development Retreat for HEC Senior Management
(Muzaffarabad, Dec. 15-17, 2023)





NAHE, being a capacity building hub of HEC, believes that the organisational success is determined largely by the impact created by the decisions of leaders. At the apex, leadership decisions have broader impact and significant resonance across the entire organisation. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to develop the leadership capabilities of the top cadre.







To create a definitive competitive edge and lead organisations for success, top tier executives must learn to unlock their leadership potential to engage and energise people for performance, build succession and self-power, and create value in the organisation.

NAHE organised Professional Development Retreat for Senior Management of HEC with an aim to provide them with an immersive learning experience, offering a unique and unparalleled opportunity to create a personal leadership narrative and explore how to build collaborative networks to drive organisational growth.

TESTIMONIALS	
 ***Mr. Ghulam Nabi*** *Professional Development Retreat for HEC Senior Management, Dec. 15-17, 2023*	**"The training was an excellent experience, marked by great interaction among participants. Collaborating with HEC added immense value, as their expertise and support enhanced the overall learning process."**
 ***Ms. Dur-e-Shahwar Sadozai*** *Professional Development Retreat for HEC Senior Management, Dec. 15-17, 2023*	**"The training was well-organised and fostered a collaborative environment. The focus on diligence and structured planning was evident throughout. The sessions facilitated valuable discussions on growth strategies and expanding our management capabilities."**

 ***Mr. Jehanzeb Khan*** *Professional Development Retreat for HEC Senior Management Dec. 15-17, 2023*	**"The training provided insightful learning opportunities, though there is room for improvement. Participants gained significant leadership insights, and the experience served as a platform for both personal and professional development."**

1) Training on Building High Performing Team



Effective teamwork in an organisation can lead to increased productivity, innovation, and job satisfaction, as well as the successful achievement of team objectives.

NAHE, following its agenda, is dedicated to equipping employees with the best office management and secretarial skills, as well as team building. NAHE organised a programme for HEC officials of up to Grade 16 at HEC Regional Centre Lahore on May 30-31, 2024. The training was focused on the following objectives with the few of team building imperatives. Some objectives focused during this exercise were:



- Team members working towards common objectives, aligning their efforts to achieve a collective aim
- Team members to share ideas, feedback, and updates to ensure everyone is informed and on the same page. Cooperating and combining individual skills and strengths.
- Team members to be assigned specific roles and responsibilities
- Clear role definitions to help prevent overlap ensuring that all necessary tasks are

covered

- To also inculcate the spirit that each member of the organization is accountable for his/her contributions and responsibilities
- Respect for each other's skills, opinions, and contributions is crucial for effective collaboration
- Diverse viewpoints and ideas. Different perspectives can lead to more creative solutions and better decision-making
- Building a sense of unity and camaraderie among team members enhances co-operation and makes the team more effective



The ultimate aim was to gear up the collaborative efforts of a group of individuals working together to achieve a common goal. The programme was held at the regional centre Lahore.

TESTIMONIALS	
 ***Ms. Rida Kamran*** *Capacity Building Training Programme for HEC Employees, May 30-31, 2024*	**"The training content was relevant. The games were interesting. Mr. Abdul Samad Khan's approach as a trainer was cooperative and respectful. The duration of the training could be extended further for better learning and overall engagement. I would recommend the program to my colleagues."**
 ***Ms. Isnazir*** *Capacity Building Training Programme for HEC Employee,s May 30-31, 2024*	**"I appreciate the activity-based approach. The trainers were excellent. It is important to conduct such training programs regularly for continuous improvement. I would recommend the programme to my peers."**

2) Drivers Safety Education & Professional Grooming (Cohorts I & II)
(HEC Islamabad, Oct. 15-16, 2023)

Another important initiative of NAHE was skill-based training for HEC drivers. NAHE held the training at HEC Islamabad on October 15-16, 2023. The training besides briefing by Islamabad traffic police on traffic rules also covered the grooming part required for the drivers' community while performing their duty. NAHE organised two cohorts of training. During the training, participants were urged to understand the importance of safe driving, an overview of local, state, and national traffic laws, vehicle licensing requirements, pre-drive vehicle checks, basic vehicle maintenance, and emergency procedures, handling breakdowns and accidents.




They were made aware to stay alert to potential hazards, maintain an appropriate distance from other vehicles, precautions for driving in rain, snow, and fog. The participants were taught about interpreting traffic signs and signals, right-of-way rules, and pedestrian and cyclist awareness. In addition to the traffic rules and responsibilities sessions conducted by officials of Islamabad Traffic Police Islamabad, grooming sessions were also conducted. In this regard, a very seasoned Airforce officer from the Provost Department of Pakistan Airforce was invited who conducted the sessions for both batches giving holistic awareness to the drivers on the ethical and social responsibilities besides rules and regulations. Since drivers are constantly on the road with the responsibility to take several other individuals with them. They need to be good in manners, etiquette and adhere to moral laws. During the training drivers were briefed about the side effects of prohibited alcoholic drinks, drugs, and medication.
Out of the total strength of HEC drivers, 87 percent of the drivers participated in the training. Drivers were also shared with content, interactive elements, and practical examples to ensure a thorough understanding of safe and effective driving practices.




Pak-UK Education Gateway Initiatives

Pak-UK Education Gateway project is a joint venture between HEC and British Council. HEC and BC have facilitated HEIs over the last 15 years in knowledge exchange and leadership development programmes, student and teacher capacity building, scholarships, and research collaborations. One of the key priority areas in HEC Vision 2025 is excellence in leadership, governance, and management. An elaborate well-planned system of higher education reforms calls for visionary leaders, strategic planners, and excellent managers to implement their collectively developed collegial designs of growth and development.

4) HE Leadership Programme under Pakistan-UK Education Gateway – Cohort II



Session with Advance HE UK Team

Keeping in view this priority area, "Higher Education Leadership" has been made a separate component in the Pak-UK Education Gateway project. Under the "Higher Education Leadership" component, to improve the quality of Governance and management through well-trained Higher Education Leadership exposure to the UK institutions as well as other stakeholders have been included in the project.



Master Class on international best practices in Strategy Planning and Resource Mobilisation in Universities by Emeritus Professor John L. Davies

In this backdrop, a second cohort of a 20-member delegation from Pakistani HEIs and HEC visited the UK from May 17 to May 25, 2024 to foster knowledge exchange and collaboration in higher education strategies. The programme aimed to develop guidelines for a University Leadership programme. The programme was designed to enable the participants:

- To examine the successes of UK universities and understand how they have achieved them.
- To investigate how UK universities have achieved accomplishments on an international level.
- To explore the role of good academic governance, and financial strategies, enhancing the student experience, engaging more effectively with commerce and communities, and developing research to assess how these factors impact.



Royal Holloway University of London



The programme was attended by the 15 Vice Chancellors of the Public Sector Universities, three Vice Chancellors of the Private Sector HEIs of Pakistan, and two officials of HEC/NAHE. The delegation had meetings with the Senior Faculty and Management of various universities in Glasgow, Cardiff and London. The programme included master classes besides very busy interesting and attractive educational sessions giving exposure to the best practices related to strategic planning financial management quality assurance to name a few. During the visit, key members of the UK Quality Assurance Agency and Advance Higher Education also briefed the participants on their mechanisms. The programme comprised various themes including Governance and Strategy and their implementation, Leadership – skills, what they are, how they are implemented and how to build leadership capacity, University engagement with stakeholders – the community, industry and students and improving the student experience, the international role of universities – partnership, research, and student mobility, the university as a sustainable business, including financial strategy, marketing, and communications, Research strategy and achieving impact and the Quality assurance and enhancement and standards. On the last day of the programme, presentations on seven themes were presented by the participants followed by deliberations and planning for the next steps with the Program Consultant David Lock.

The closing session was held on May 25, 2024. Chairman HEC addressed the participating Vice Chancellors through Video Conferencing and urged them to cascade their learning during the visit to make their universities hubs of quality and innovation and to ensure that the best practices may be followed. In the end certificates were distributed among the participants with souvenirs also presented to the British resource persons and officials.

Key Takeaways of the Programme:

1. **Exchange of best practices:** Participants learned innovative ideas to improve the linkages between industry and academia, research initiatives, and administrative strategies that participants can implement in their own universities.
2. **Networking:** Got an opportunity to build connections with other educational leaders that can lead to collaborative opportunities, partnerships, and knowledge-sharing.
3. **Professional development:** Exposure to different academic cultures and systems helped Vice Chancellors enhance their leadership skills and broaden their perspectives.
4. **Inspiration:** Visiting successful universities in UK inspired the Vice Chancellors to set higher goals and strive for excellence in their own institutions.
5. The leadership program positively influenced the Vice Chancellors. Implementing the learned strategies in their universities will lead to benefits for their students and faculty in the long run.

Testimonials of a few Participating Vice Chancellors	
 ***Prof. Dr. Arabella Bhutto*** *Vice Chancellor Leadership Programme at UK, May 17–25, 2024*	**"It was a wonderful learning experience. We are eager to replicate some of the lessons learnt in our universities. We all are really thankful and excited at the same time."**
 ***Mr. Khalid Masood Gondal*** *Vice Chancellor Leadership Programme at UK*	**"A great program on leadership. One of memorable International mega event of my life. Excellent organization, facilitation, program sequence, arrangements and content. Our heartfelt gratitude to chairman HEC."**

 ***Ms. Nusrat Shah*** *Vice Chancellor Leadership Program at UK*	**"Thank you for organizing this much needed, comprehensive and effective course on administrative leadership in higher education. I highly appreciate this great initiative and opportunity for learning from some of the top UK universities and how we can try to implement their interventions in our universities."**
 ***Mr. Wasim Qazi*** *Vice Chancellor Leadership Program at UK*	**"This program has undoubtedly equipped us with strategic insights and practical knowledge that will be instrumental in advancing the higher education sector in Pakistan. We look forward to continued collaboration and support from both the British Council and the HEC in our endeavors to enhance academic excellence and leadership within our institutions."**

5) PhD Supervisors Capacity Building Programme (Phase II & III)

PhD supervision plays a pivotal role in shaping the research capabilities and academic prowess of doctoral candidates. However, in the Pakistani higher education sector, there exists a significant gap in the quality and consistency of PhD supervision practices. To address this gap and uplift the standard of research, it was imperative to introduce a structured and comprehensive training framework for PhD supervisors.







As the training of PhD supervisors is a sub-component of Pak-UK Education Gateway Project, NAHE executed the component in collaboration with the British Council. Coventry University UK was selected as the consulting resource through an open Expression of Interest (EOI) process administered by the British Council.

In this regard NAHE, in collaboration with the British Council, organised a series of five-day workshops for PhD Supervisors Capacity Building Programme in three cohorts, training 128 participants from various universities across Pakistan. Out of these 128 participants, 18 participants were selected through a competitive process and an advanced-level PhD supervision training was conducted over five days at Coventry University in the UK from March 4-8, 2024.

The ultimate objective was to further cascade PhD supervisors, thereby enabling NAHE to offer both basic and advanced-level courses.

The closing session of the Coventry training in UK was chaired by Executive Director HEC Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum who expressed his satisfaction over the outcome of this exercise and urged the supervisors to perform their job with utmost ethical and professional integrity.

TESTIMONIALS	
Prof. Dr. Ali Muhammad Waryah *Capacity Building Programme for PhD Supervisors*	**"The advance training was fully facilitated prior to departure for the Coventry by the staff of NAHE, HEC, British Counsel and Coventry University. All the participants were guided properly throughout their journey from Pakistan. All the training sessions were well planned and coherent."**
 ***Dr Haseeb Anwar*** *Capacity Building Programme for PhD Supervisors*	**"A special thanks to the National Academy of Higher Education, HEC, Pakistan for making this training a learning journey."**
 ***Dr. Imran Sajid*** *Capacity Building Programme for PhD Supervisors*	**"Overall the advance PhD supervisors capacity building programme was life time experience and was great learning experience."**
Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ijaz *Capacity Building Programme for PhD Supervisors*	**I express my sincere gratitude to NAHE-HEC, the British Council, and Coventry University for their collaborative efforts in organising the Capacity Building Program for PhD Supervisors in Pakistan, held from March 4-8, 2024. This initiative is pivotal in advancing the quality of postgraduate research in Pakistan by providing advanced training opportunities for supervisors. This programme, through targeted training and skill development, lays a robust foundation for the advancement of research across diverse disciplines in Pakistan**

3. Women Leadership and Mentoring Programme (WEMP)

Another hallmark of NAHE this year was the launch of the Women's Leadership and Mentoring Programme (WEMP) under the Higher Education Development Programme (HEDP) aimed to empower women for leadership roles in HEIs through mentoring. Based on the success of the Women Leadership Programme (WLP), NAHE aims to make WEMP a regular feature in HEIs through policy development for the women leadership of HEIs as well as HEC.

A national committee comprised of the following highly accomplished women leaders was formed which also co-opted two male members:

1. Ms. Noor Amna Malik; Managing Director NAHE (HEC) (Convener)
2. Dr. Saima Hamid; Former Vice Chancellor Fatima Jinnah Women University (Member)
3. Ms. Afshan Tahseen Former Chairperson National Commission on the Rights of Child Islamabad (Member)
4. Dr. Uzma Qureshi; Former VC The Women's University, Multan (Member)
5. Professor Dr. Arabella Bhutto VC Shaheed Allah Bakhsh Soomro University of Arts, Design & Heritage, Jamshoro (Member)
6. Dr. Wasima Shahzad; Dean Air University Islamabad (Member)
7. Prof. Dr. Anwar Ul Hassan Gillani, Consultant (QA) – HEC (Co-opted Member)
8. Mr. Tahir Abbas Zaidi; PC NAHE (HEDP) – (Co-opted Member)
9. Ms. Wajiha Hassan, Deputy Director, National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), (Secretary)
10. The mandate/terms of reference (TORs) of the committee include:
    a. Designing a comprehensive Women Empowerment Mentorship Programme objectives, structure, and guidelines tailored to the needs and challenges faced by female employees in Public Sector universities of Pakistan.
    b. Developing training modules and their contents.
    c. Designing mechanism for mentor and mentee matching.
    d. Developing a toolkit for Mentors and mentees.
    e. Establishing evaluation criteria and mechanisms to measure the program's effectiveness.
    f. Any other point/area that is suggested and proposed by the Committee during the preparation of the module.

The first meeting of the committee was held on June 24, 2024 and it is expected that it would come up with a sustainable model of mentoring female employees in the Public Sector Universities of Pakistan. Up till now, the committee's deliverables include the following documents in a consolidated manner:

i. WEMP Framework
ii. Toolkit for Mentors
iii. Toolkit for Mentees
iv. Five Modules including modules on Mentoring, Communication, Higher Education Challenges, Conflict Resolution, and Growth & Reflection.



4. Pre-Service National Faculty Development Programme for IPFP



Cohort-II, Batch-V of the Pre-Service National Faculty Development Program (NFDP) for IPFP Fellows at the HEC Secretariat, Islamabad.

a. IPFP Assessment

An initial evaluation was conducted for recently graduated doctoral students who expressed their intent to enroll in the Pre-Service NFDP (National Faculty Development Program) training program. The application phase garnered significant interest, with 517 candidates expressing their desire to participate, out of which 473 candidates actively participated in the assessment.

The assessment encompassed a substantial component evaluating fundamental knowledge, subject-specific expertise, and research-related proficiency. It should be noted that the inclusion of this assessment was integral to ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the selection process. Moreover, it catalyzed fostering a competitive environment and enhancing the overall quality of candidates.

It is noteworthy that, following the assessment, a total of 249 candidates demonstrated exceptional qualifications, meeting the prescribed criteria, and thereby earning eligibility to proceed to the next stage of the program.



a. Training Programme



NAHE organised the National Faculty Development Programme (NFDP) for the Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Programme Fellows before their placement at any host public sector HEIs. During COVID-19, NFDP 2021 was conducted in online mode. However, from FY 2022 onwards, the programme was conducted face-to-face with a modified version. NFDP 2023-24 was organised as a three-week in-person programme to accelerate the transfer of essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes in three dimensions of a successful career as a faculty member: (1) teaching and learning, (2) applied research, and (3) professional practice.



Cohort-II of the Pre-Service National Faculty Development Programme for IPFP Fellows at HEC



Several different activities and technologies were utilised to achieve its learning objectives. These included lectures, presentation, group assessment, triangulation, and assignments. The participants were fully committed to the programme and dedicated at least eight hours per day to the activities for six days every week for three weeks. Learning assessment was both formative and summative. After successful completion of the program, lists

of NFDP Fellows were shared with HEIs for placement of one year.
A quantitative summary of the IPFP selection training and placement during the year is as follows:

Description	Candi-dates Applied	Appeared in Pre-Asssess-ment Test	Qualified for NFDP	Trained Fellows	Consent Forms Received	Offer Letters Issued	Placed HEIs
Batch – I *(2020)*	622	622	493	493	556	408	392
Batch – II *(2021)*	1073	979	568	499	543	392	372
Batch – III *(2022)*	664	664	69	50	53	41	40
Batch – IV *(2023)*	659	562	359	278	595	226	224
Batch – V *(2024)*	517	473	249	49	-	-	-
Total	**3535**	**3300**	**1738**	**1369**	**1747**	**1067**	**1028**



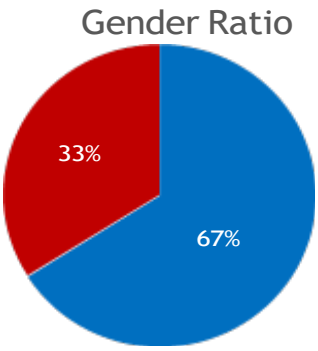
NFDP for FY 2023-24 conscientiously prioritised the inclusion of individuals from diverse subject areas, thereby fostering an inclusive and cross-sectional platform. Equally significant was the deliberate attention given to provincial and gender-based representation, ensuring equitable participation across various regions and genders.

b. Placement of IPFP Fellows



Cohort-II of the Pre-Service National Faculty Development Programme for IPFP Fellows at the HEC

For the fiscal year 2023-24, 278 IPFP fellows were trained in 12 Cohorts and out of these 278 IPFP fellows 226 individuals have been provided placement at different public sector universities of Pakistan.



TESTIMONIALS	
 ***Dr. Sajjad Dino Shah*** *IPFP Batch IV Cohort V*	**"The teaching method was highly effective, facilitating a clear and deep understanding of the material."**
 ***Dr. Ghulam Aisha*** *IPFP Batch IV Cohort VI*	**"All sessions were highly effective and exceptionally well-organised. The activities were both engaging and perfectly aligned with the training needs."**
 ***Dr. Saqib Saleem Abdullah*** *IPFP Batch IV Cohort V*	**"The modules were well-structured and enhanced with relevant examples, making the concepts more accessible and easier to understand."**
 ***Dr. Hina Najam*** *IPFP Batch V Cohort I*	**"The IPFP training provides a valuable opportunity to express our thoughts, making it an extremely useful and enriching experience."**

HEC Policy Orientation on Sexual Harassment in Workplace

In addition to its various academic and professional development programmes, NAHE has placed a strong emphasis on workplace safety, particularly addressing the issue of sexual harassment. To promote awareness and foster a safe working environment, NAHE has organised interactive sessions aimed at both newly inducted and in-service faculty members.

The main purpose of these sessions was to give policy orientation to the teachers about this menace. These sessions have now become mandatory in all the trainings. These sessions focus on educating participants about different forms of sexual harassment, helping them recognise inappropriate behaviours, and ensuring they understand their rights under workplace harassment laws in Pakistan. By equipping faculty with the necessary knowledge, NAHE aims to empower them to protect themselves and take appropriate action to address and prevent harassment within their respective institutions.

Orientation Session in Progress



Snap shots of few Role Play activities in Progress

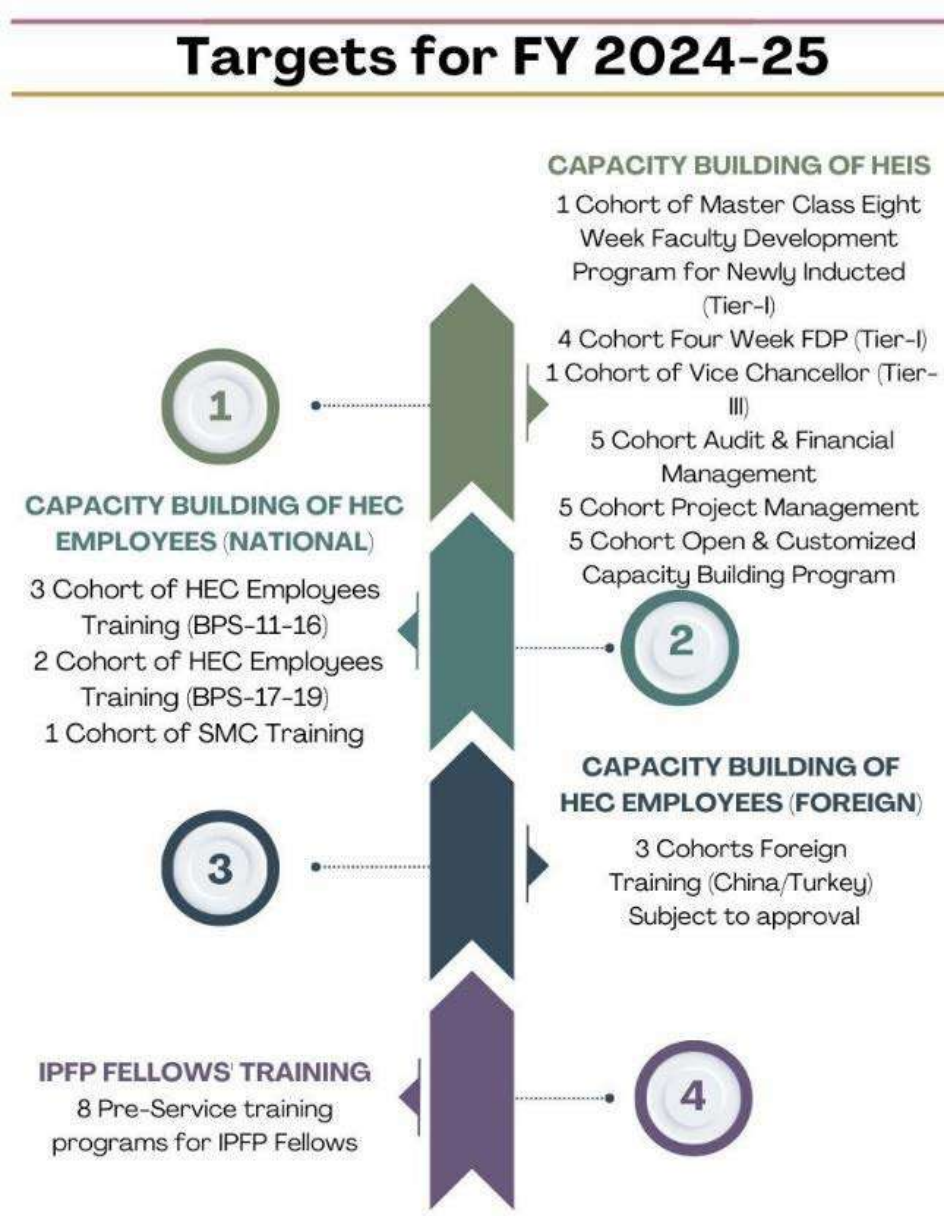




Targets for the Next Fiscal Year (2024-25)

As we conclude the fiscal year 2023-24, NAHE stands proud of the milestones we have achieved and the strides we have made in advancing higher education across the nation. This year, we have not only overcome significant challenges but have also embraced new opportunities for growth and innovation. Our commitment to fostering academic excellence, equity, and accessibility remains steadfast, and we are encouraged by the collaborative efforts and resilience demonstrated by our members and partners. Looking ahead, we are excited to build on this momentum, continue addressing the evolving needs of the higher education landscape, and drive meaningful

impact in the years to come. Together, we will continue to shape a brighter future for students and institutions alike, reinforcing our mission to elevate the standards of higher education and empower the next generation of leaders.



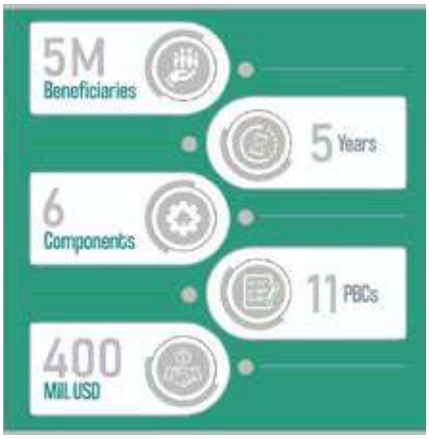
Higher Education Development in Pakistan

HEC together with World Bank dedicated USD 400 million to transforming the higher education landscape in Pakistan and ushering in a new era of research support, academia-industry collaboration and student empowerment in the country. In the FY 2023-24, HEDP made significant progress and covered all the major components of Pakistan's higher education ecosystem. From empowering the students with high-quality academics and supporting HEIs to conduct meaningful research which can be patented and moved towards commercialisation to offering Online and Distance Learning facilities which enable students to receive quality education through their personal computers, laptops, and even mobile phones.

Key Achievements in the Year

1	**Research Grants**	**10 Rapid Technology Transfer Grants were awarded in six key areas focusing on economic contribution and import substitution.**
2	Quality Enhancement Cells in Affiliated Colleges (QECACs) and Teachers Training	Postsecondary Education Reforms Unit (PERU) established 14 QECACs. **Four** capacity building workshops were successfully conducted for 521 faculty of Affiliated Colleges in Balochistan and Sindh.
3	IT Initiatives	Three Mega IT contracts signed including a. Data Centres establishment in Karachi and Lahore b. Enterprise Resource Solution of Student Life Cycle Systems for 20 Universities c. Expansion of Pakistan Education Research Network (PERN) network ring
4	Support to the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE)	In June 2024, HEDP completed a comprehensive Training Need Assessment (TNA) for higher education institutions (HEIs) in Punjab and Sindh. A detailed plan worth Rs. 450 million to train faculty and nonfaculty was also finalised in the reporting period.
5	World Bank Missions	The 9th and 10th missions of the HEDP project were held in February and August 2024; both appreciated the project's progress and improved their rating based on the project's overall progress at around 90% of its targets.
6	Project Steering Committee Meeting (SCM)	HEDP held its 8th (SCM) meeting in March 2024. SC is the highest forum of the project comprising senior officials from federal and provincial higher education structures.
7	Financial Autonomy & Revenue Generation	HEDP transferred funds to 75 universities in June 2024 for a) Solarisation, b) Research Commercialisation; and c) endowment funds

The Challenges



With continuously reducing public funding for higher education over the last decade, probably the most significant challenge for HEC was the monetary funding needed to achieve its strategic goals, and that too when the pandemic was at its peak. The leadership of HEC realised that the damages of the pandemic towards national education could have consequences that would go beyond decades since the closure of schools and universities was being practiced globally. Apart from getting

necessary funds, HEDP project also provided the required expert team that could deliver the desired results in the best possible specifications while being effective and efficient at the same time. This is when a robust hiring campaign was initiated and after a thorough shortlisting and recruitment process, the top talent was brought on board. HEC has already meticulously defined its key strategic areas that need additional technical and financial support. These included cutting research grants to encourage exports, technology for the higher education sector, capacity building of the academic fraternity, and implementation/roll-out of key higher education policies like Undergraduate, Graduate and Online & Distance Learning.

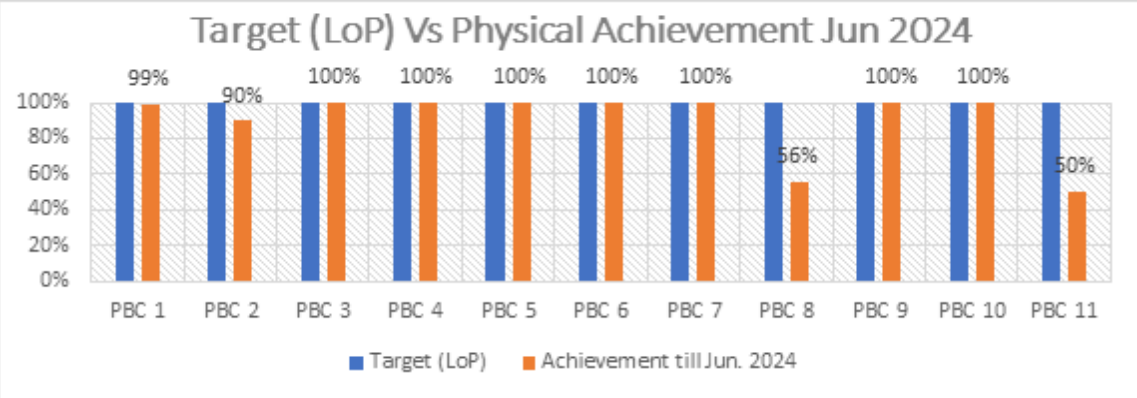
Operational Plan of HEDP

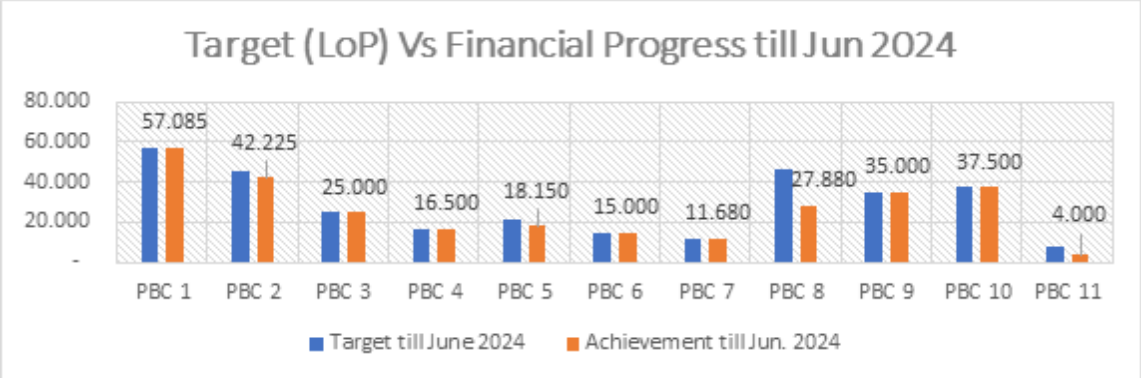
The comprehensive plan devised by HEC and HEDP leadership was divided into six components which included the following:

1. Nurturing Academic Excellence in Strategic Sectors
2. Supporting Decentralised Higher Education Institutions for Improved Teaching and Learning
3. Equipping Students and Higher Education Institutions with Modern Technology
4. Higher Education Management Information System and Data-Driven Services
5. Capacity Building through Partnerships, Project Management, Monitoring & Evaluation
6. Improving access and quality of remote learning and support to universities and Affiliated Colleges

Project Progress

Despite several challenges, the project stands good at an overall performance of 90 % in its PBCs performance, post latest rounds of third-party validations held in May/ June 2024.





The disbursement and the expenditure of technical assistance of USD 81 million has been slow in the past but since much of it has been now routed to IT and allied procurements it is hoped that it will expedite in the coming quarters. The overall progress of technical assistance is however around 25%.

Project Key Components

1. Component 1 - Nurturing Academic Excellence in Strategic Sectors

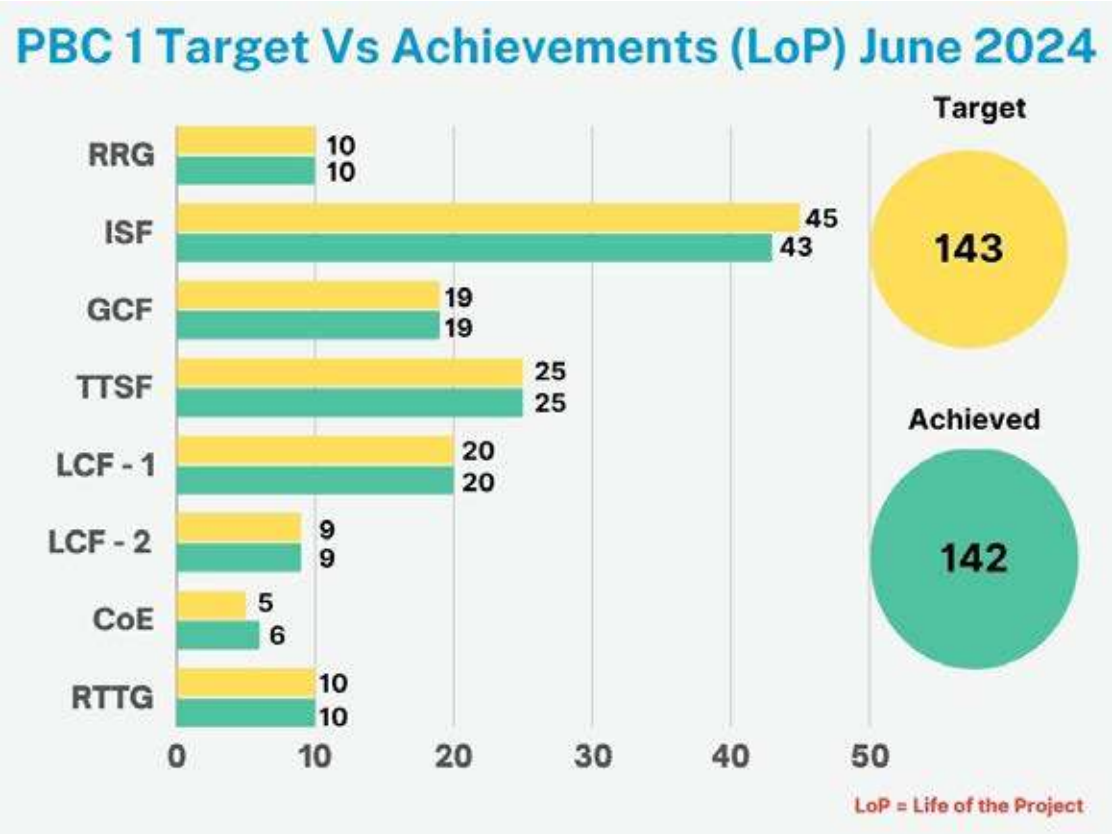
HEC and HEDP leadership identified the need for enhancing research capacities of HEIs to cover strategic sectors that are linked directly to national social and economic development through specialised grants. Sectors like healthcare, food security, IT and telecommunications, climate change and environment, sustainability and several other sectors were chosen to provide the necessary support through HEDP. To ensure the grants are managed transparently and effectively, the Research Grants Management System (RGMS) was implemented which remained crucial to the management of research grants cycle including the shortlisting of applications, grant awards, and monitoring and tracking the outcomes of the allocated grants based on several key factors.

To ensure the grants covered maximum social and economic domains and most participants could have the opportunity to win the grants based on the value of their research projects, six different grant programmes were introduced.

1. Rapid Research Grant (RRG)
2. Grand Challenge Fund (GCF)
3. Local Challenge Fund (LCF)
4. Technology Transfer Support Fund (TTSF)
5. Innovator Seed Fund (ISF)
6. Centres of Excellence (COE) grants
7. Rapid Technology Transfer Grants (RTTG)

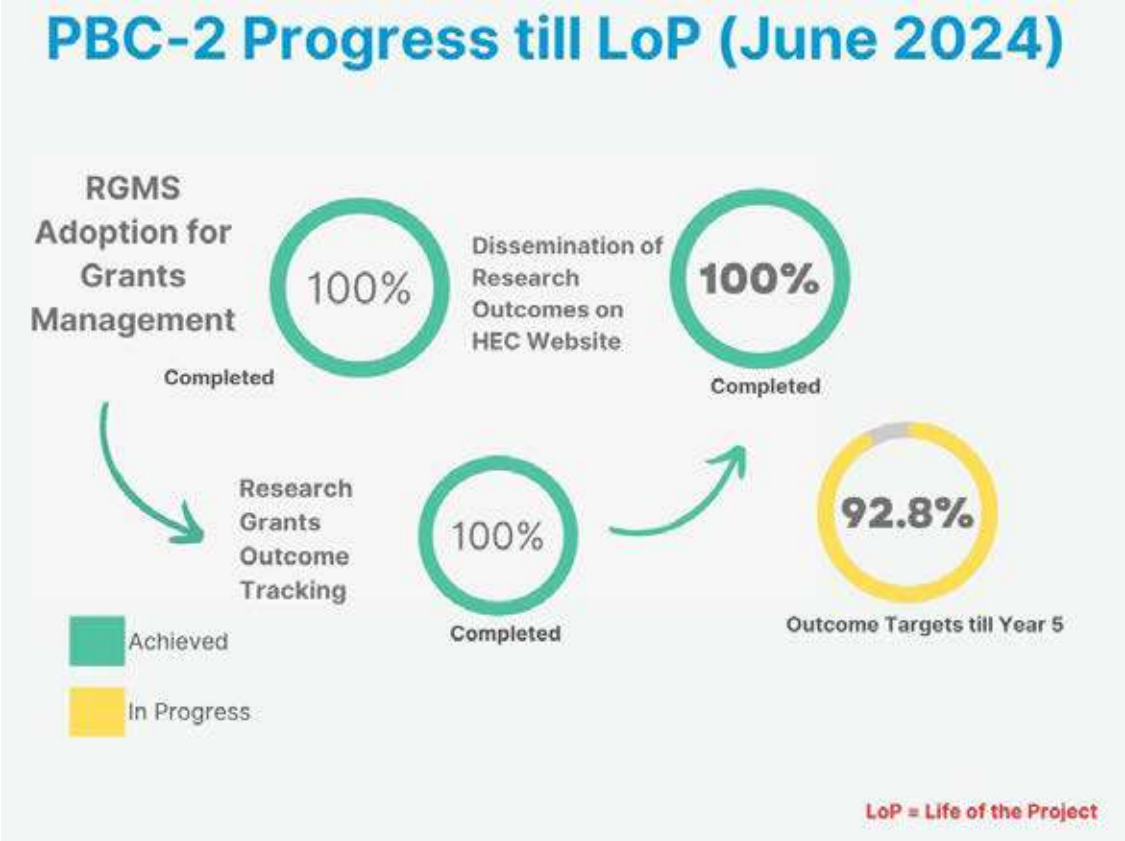
The research projects that received the grants via HEDP included several cities and covered all provinces/regions of the country. The winning research projects range from IT initiatives to healthcare and agricultural technology solutions and offer high-value

commercialisation opportunities that can directly enhance the social and economic conditions of Pakistan. These research projects also provide the needed information to understand that HEIs all over Pakistan have immense potential for future research-based initiatives becoming a pivotal point for innovations in the future. More detailed information about each research grant can be viewed at the official HEC website. The overall progress of Component 1 has been on track and 99% targets have been achieved, as shown in the following diagram.



Once the grants are allocated and released through a milestone-based process, the monitoring and tracking phase of the grants is activated. Since the grants awarded are in high numbers, spread across several cities in the five provinces, and each research initiative carried equal significance, the management and supervision of these research projects required extensive efforts from the HEDP team. The research grant management system in this sense provided an online dashboard which could provide detailed information regarding each research project's performance and areas where intervention was needed from the HEDP team.

Component 1 of HEDP is divided into two parts, Performance Based Conditions (PBC) 1 and 2 .PBC 1 is the identification and awarding of grants to the highest value-based projects, and PBC 2 includes the monitoring and tracking of research projects whose current progress can be seen in the image below.



Component 1 has already been awarded all grants and is now monitoring these except RTTG. 10 RTTG grants were awarded in 6 key areas focusing on economic contribution and import substitution. To further monitor and ensure the completion of these research projects the established sustainability plan will remain active to monitor and sustain research grants as well as a communication plan to gather and publish impactful grants is already developed and remains in progress.

2. Component 2 - Supporting Decentralised Higher Education Institutions for Improved Teaching and Learning

HEDP's Component 2 is focusing on the quality enhancement of the teaching and learning practices within the affiliating universities and affiliated colleges. This included the quality standardisation of the overall curriculum and academics, the capacity building of teachers, staff and faculty, and to standardise the assessments and related practices to ensure the quality of the passing out students were up to the mark and relative to the current industry requirements so they could easily be incorporated in the workplaces.

The Component 2 team focused on the decentralised higher education institutions (Affiliated Colleges) for implementation of improved teaching and learning practices which aim to improve the quality of education delivered by affiliated colleges as devised in the revised Undergraduate Education Policy (UEP) by HEC.

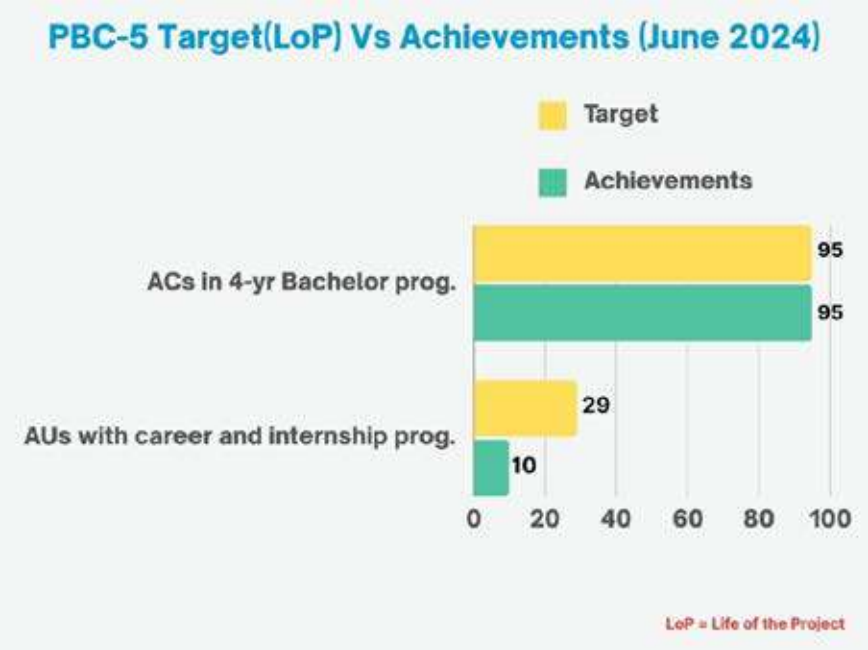
This component is supported under five PBCs:

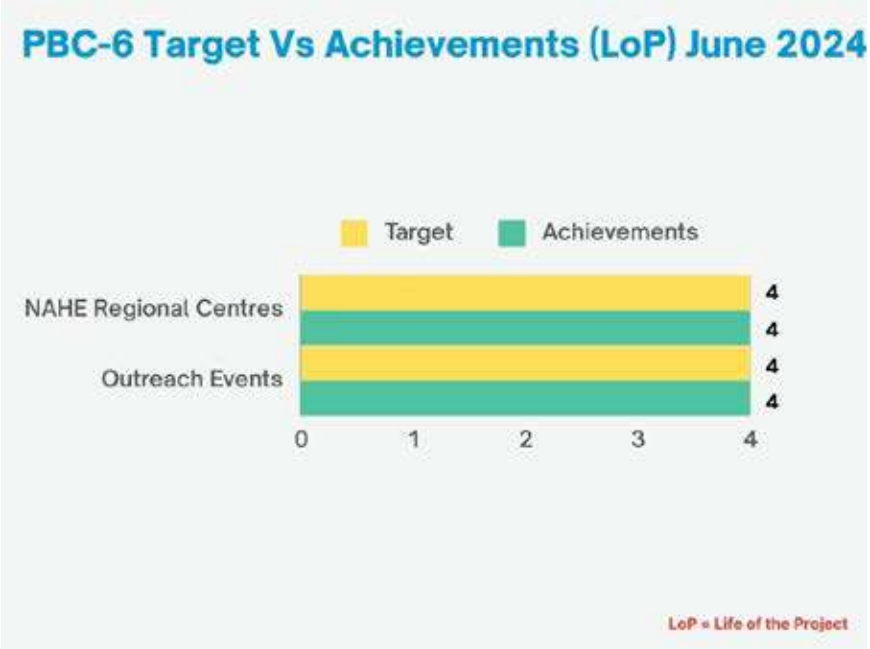
- PBC 3 -- Number of functional QECAC in affiliating universities
- PBC 4 – Improvement of Undergraduate Education – Associate Degrees (four semesters)
- PBC 5 – Improvement of Undergraduate Education – four-year Bachelor's programmes (eight semesters)
- PBC 6 – Establishment of NAHE Regional Centres
- PBC 7 – Proportion of faculty and staff trained

The achievement of Component 2 targets is the responsibility of Postsecondary Education Reform Unit (PERU) of the HEDP/HEC.









To gauge the impact on learning outcomes of the revised Undergraduate Education Policy (UEP) and the trainings and support provided by the HEDP team, an assessment study named learning skill assessment test (LSAT) was initiated. LSAT is a general ability test formulated by PERU in collaboration with Dr. Salvador Malo, the World Bank's International Consultant. LSAT is not subject-specific and focuses on testing the students' "General Ability" in three areas:

a. Information Management,

b. Communication, and

c. Problem Solving

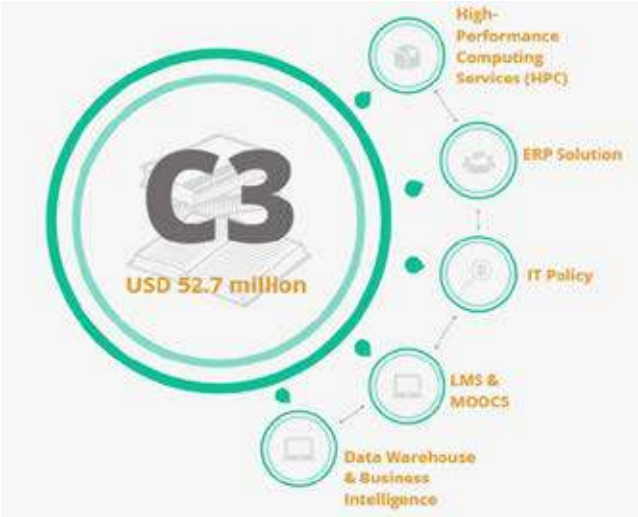
More than 5000 students across Pakistan participated in the baseline assessment. Sixteen affiliating universities were engaged to assist HEDP in assessing students enrolled in affiliated colleges.

The LSAT data will establish a national baseline of students' skills in information management, communication, and problem-solving skills. The next assessments will be conducted in December 2024 and May 2025 to assess improvement in the acquisition of general abilities among students enrolled in affiliated colleges of Pakistan. As a part of the HEDP evaluation framework Component 2 team shall commission the services of a reputed research firm to undertake the study on "Students' Satisfaction and Graduate Tracking Study in Higher Education". This is one way to ensure the HEDP's QECACs and QECs are operating at their optimum levels and HEIs and ACs are improving their teaching and learning practices forming the foundation for consistent improvement in the future.

Component 2 working closely with the HEC 's ACAD and QA divisions keeps supporting the rollout of revised UEP nationwide. The capacity-building activities for ACs' faculty were expanded to Baluchistan and Sindh apart from the Central and Northern regions of Pakistan. C2 completed all its project targets in the reporting period except for implementation of career and internship framework which remains in progress and is being monitored by the concerned authorities to ensure its timely completion.

3. Component 3 - Equipping Students and Higher Education Institutions with Modern Technology

The leadership of HEC already visioned the digital national higher education infrastructure since 2008-9, and this is the reason HEDP's Component 3 and 4 were focusing on digitising the entire national higher education infrastructure. This is perhaps the most challenging aspect of the whole HEDP project since the private sector HEIs already employed digital education delivery solutions while many public sector HEIs lack the very basic digital infrastructure. HEDP's Component 3 team conducted thorough research to determine the starting point of the national digital infrastructure implementation for the higher education sector in Pakistan.



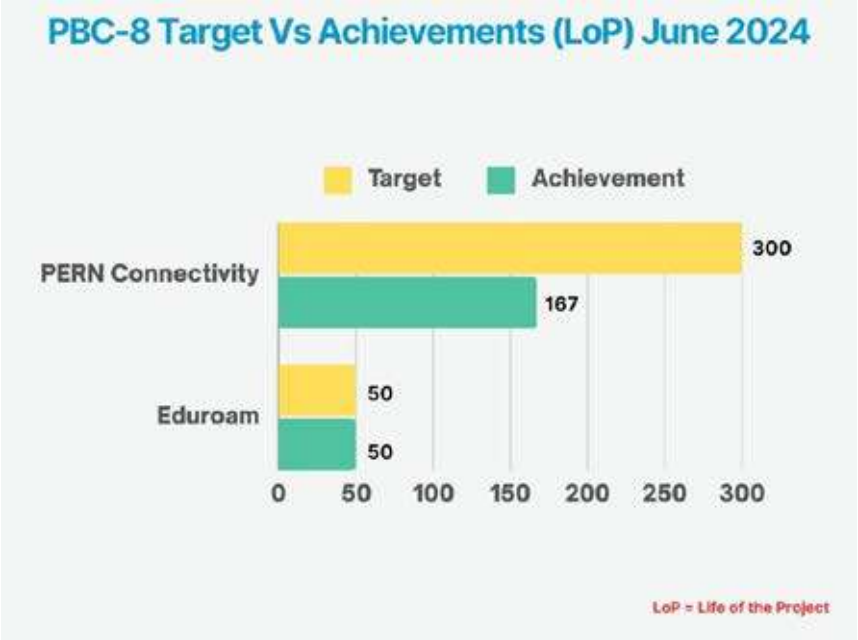
HEC has been adding more features, products, and services through its flagship project 'Pakistan Education and Research Network' or PERN while increasing its reach to HEIs and affiliated colleges all over Pakistan. HEDP's contributions are increasing the value of PERN exponentially by procuring and placing Astrolabes Data Centres which will be powered by Cloud Computing solutions and High-Performance Computing (HPC) solutions while offering several other services that are critical to develop the new Cloud-Enabled National Education Infrastructure. HEDP aims to brand and market these products/services for wider and effective usage by HE sectors and even beyond. HEDP/HEC team decided to brand these around renowned historic Muslim scientists and concepts.



The overall contributions and impact of Muslim scientists, astronomers, inventors, and the Islamic concepts that resonate with collective good is an integral part of the evolution of science and technology as we know it today. The HEC team decided to honour them. Naming the strategic IT products and services of HEC after renowned Muslim personalities is an endeavour to connect the grand past with the promising future while highlighting Islamic cultural recognition, educational inspiration, promotion of diversity, and alignment with values at a global scale.



The Component 3 team has already initiated the implementation phases of premium ERP-based Student Lifecycle Systems (SLCS) and Learning Management Systems (LMS) that will enable the HEIs to digitise and automate their administrative, operational, and management practices. LMS will enable the students to learn from online means through their computers, laptops, and even mobile devices. HEDP's HPC solutions will enable HEIs and students alike to conduct extensive research projects including AI-powered simulations that require high-level computation power which will now be available at remarkably subsidized costs if compared with commercially available alternatives.



Cloud Computing Solutions among other services offered by HEDP offer ultimate scalability, utility, and flexibility to HEIs countrywide. Even the most remote universities and affiliated colleges can now gain access to the latest and strategic IT products and services through PERN, which already covers almost the whole country. Once the strategic IT solutions are fully implemented HEIs will be able to deliver cloud-based education services which facilitate the Online and Distance Learning concepts, based on the Federal Ministry of IT and Telecommunication's 'Cloud First Policy' the cloud-enabled workforce of Pakistan will be initiated through the grassroots levels as per the vision of HEC 2025 and beyond.

Component 3 made significant progress in several mega IT procurements despite complex procurement challenges. Data centres in Karachi and Lahore are finalized while the ERP/SLC contract has also been signed. Several other IT procurements are in the advanced stage (contract signing) with a few in the midway (bids evaluation review) while a few are in the initial stages (RFPs released).

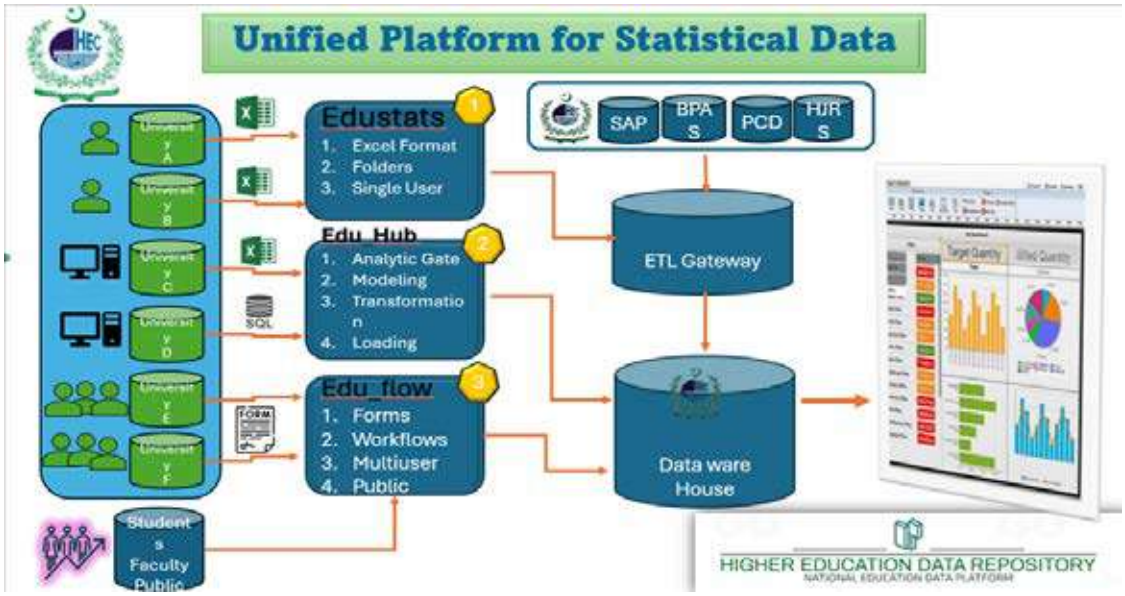
4. Component 4 - Higher Education Management Information System and Data-Driven Services

Component 4 of HEDP is closely linked to Component 3 since Data Warehouse and BI will be planned post-execution of all IT initiatives mentioned earlier so that consolidated and seamless data flows up from all applications for the management of dashboards. This will enable the HEC to receive a bird's eye view of the whole national higher education landscape and will be able to make data-driven decisions that can ensure maximum efficiency in terms of resource management, funds management, policy making, minimizing the technological gap, minimizing the academia and industry gap, and facilitate increased collaboration with global National Research Educational Networks (NRENs) and strategic partners.

At present, HECs and HEIs are maintaining numerous information system applications to support students, faculty, researchers, universities, industries, and public interactions. Application data for these systems currently reside in relational databases (SQL Server, MySQL, MS Access) and non-relational data sources (sequential files, VSAM files, Excel).



Meanwhile, for internal business processes and to streamline financial, project management/ execution, funding, information management, grant approval, HR management, communications, student management etc. multiple off-the-shelf/inhouse ERPs, CMS, LMS, automation systems are in place by HEC/HEIs. Currently, information access from these systems is supported by data inquiry screens/OLTP (online transaction processing) Reports within each application, extensive development of custom reports, and limited ad-hoc access to the operational database of each application. The same situations prevail in most universities.



HEDP, with the support of Higher Education Data Repository, is already working to develop a centralised data warehouse/business intelligence platform over the private cloud through Astrolabes Data Centres. This centralised data warehouse will enable HEC to make more informed decisions through the usage of actual data collected from HEIs across the country over time, ensuring there are minimal risks to financial decisions and resource allocation while being completely up to date with the latest market requirements and industry needs.

Component 4 has already achieved maturity with the HEC core HEDR division taking care of continuous inflow, cleaning, and processing of data stream from different HEIs.

5. Component 5 - Capacity Building through Partnerships, Project Management, Monitoring & Evaluation

HEDP's Component 5 is facilitating HEC in increasing its core functions of regulation, capacity building, and funding of Pakistan's higher education sector through strategic and focused technical assistance. Component 5 primarily includes the overall project management functions needed to manage critical activities of the project in addition to Capacity building by the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE).

The Project Coordination Unit (PCU) supports all components in various overall project coordination and management activities that mainly include human resources, environment and safety assessments, procurement, finance, communications, and project management. These also included conducting key stakeholder meetings such as regular World Bank Progress Meetings/ WB Missions, Steering Committee Meetings, coordination with the Economic Affairs Division (EAD)/ other government departments and Third-Party Validation.

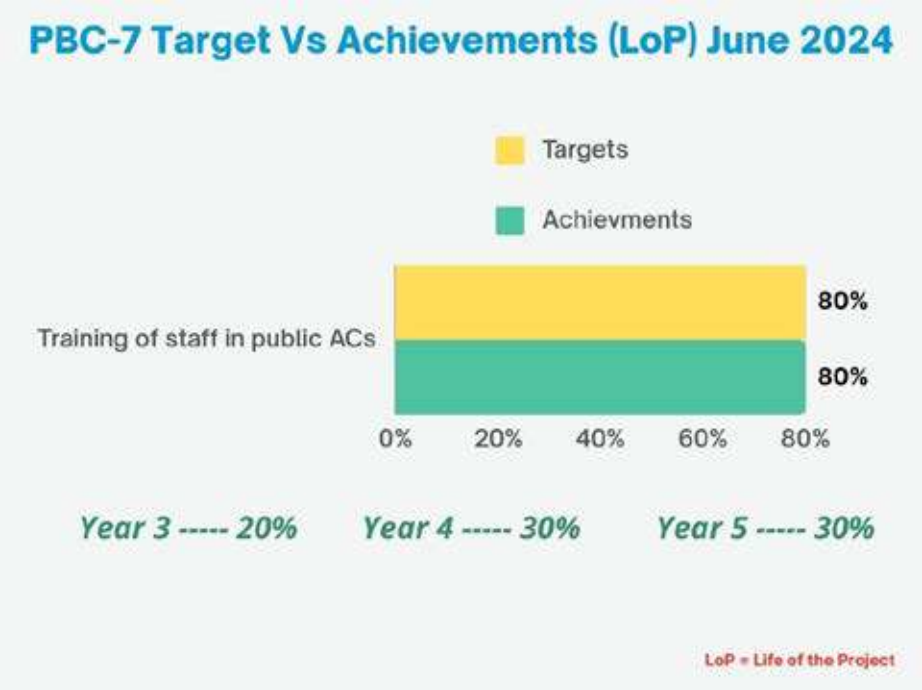
In addition, there are several capacity-building activities in this component that include training for HEC staff, and HEIs faculty focusing on women leadership training via

NAHE. Another key activity under this component of HEDP is to support and strengthen NAHE towards its empowerment as an independent entity.

Under Component 5, NAHE conducted outreach events to engage the local HEIs in Punjab, Baluchistan and KP post-establishment of regional centres. Training needs assessment for academic and non-academic staff of Sindh and Punjab was also completed. A detailed 3-tier plan is being developed for extensive capacity building of HEIs staff nationwide.

The Women Leadership Programme, a successful implementation under the HEDP project, has empowered 196 women from HEC and different universities. To ensure the sustainability of this initiative, a Women Empowerment Mentorship Programme is currently being developed for all female employees of public sector universities nationwide by a committee of experts.

Under the guidance of Executive Director HEC, NAHE team has developed a detailed three-tier capacity-building plan under HEDP for both teaching and administrative cadres within universities. One hundred public sector universities from all the provinces will be selected for the training of approximately 3000 teachers with a cohort size of 30.



6. Component 6 - Improving access and quality of remote learning and support to univer

Component 6 aims to increase the support to HEIs affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with emergency grants and special funds to tackle that crisis, as well as being prepared for any future ones. HEDP is also aiding universities in improving their Financial Autonomy and developing a framework to address these needs. In addition, under the same component, HEDP is to ensure access to the latest technology and connectivity, improving governance and long-term sustainability of institutions.



Component 6 completed the five-year fund transfer to relevant HEIs focusing on financial autonomy and revenue generation projects, in addition to monitoring the utilization of year 3 & 4 funds transferred to HEIs. ODL policy is already approved by HEC and orientation sessions were held to roll out the policy in selected HEIs having the capacity and infrastructure to offer online courses on an immediate basis.

HEDP also has to develop Online Distance Learning and then implement it after approvals and consultations with the key higher education institutions. The policy is already drafted and approved and its implementation is under way.



Summary

HEDP has made significant progress in achieving its targets since its inception, including a few activities that concluded in June 2024. Despite several challenges, the project stands good at an overall performance of 90% in all its PBCs, which constitutes a major part of the project. However, its performance in technical assistance, which constitutes a minor part, is around 30%.

Regular project progress update meetings were conducted to keep the project on track. Several project success stories were shared in print, digital and online media. Compliance with ESMF was ensured along with monitoring of grants around environmental and social aspects. Owing to the pressing demands of the Economic Affairs Division (Government of Pakistan) two rounds of Interim Third-Party Validation (TPV) were successfully conducted resulting in a release of US$28.5 million, now amounting to an accumulative of US$ 290.0 million disbursed for the project.

To complete the project's remaining activities, especially around IT, HEDP is being extended by 12 months (up to June 30, 2025). World Bank completed the project restructuring and shared the updated financing agreement in April 2024. Moving forward, the revised PC-1 is being finalised. Executive Director HEC took special interest in the revised PC-1, suggesting an increase in the scope of capacity-building activities by NAHE.

The project performance in PBCs worth US$ 319 million which constitutes a major part of the project, has been good. The project PBC's progress versus its target is around 90% while it is expected that in the upcoming round of third-party validation in December 2024, it will reach to around 94%. However, project performance in Technical Assistance (TA) worth US$ 81 million has been challenging owing to mega IT procurements. The overall progress of TA is around 30%. However, these (procurements worth US$ 57 million) are now progressing well, and it is hoped that it will expedite in the coming quarters.



Key project beneficiaries pose for a group photo with Executive Director HEC and the World Bank/HEDP team.

Higher Education Data Repository

Introduction

Keeping in view, the increasing demand for reliable Higher Education Statistics (HES) by national and international researchers, planners and policy makers, Higher Education Commission (HEC) under Section 10(1)(x) of HEC Ordinance established a Statistical Information Unit (SIU) in September 2004. SIU has been responsible to plan, collect, compile, and analyse information about higher education institutions (HEIs) and to make it available as a major source of information for researchers, planners, and policy makers. After 38th meeting of the Commission, new Organisational Chart of HEC was circulated, and SIU was renamed as Higher Education Data Repository (HEDR). HEDR is responsible for various national level tasks including the following:

1. Higher Education Statistics (HES) Collection, Compilation, Analytics
2. Dissemination of HES to national and international stakeholders
3. To Maintain PhD Country Directory (PCD)
4. To Maintain Online PhD Research Repository (PRR)
5. Ranking of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) (will be resumed soon)

Higher Education Statistics

During the year 2022-23, around 248 (148 public sector and 100 private sector) HEIs were coordinated for collection of required statistics. The collected statistics have been critically examined, assembled, and analysed. The enrolment and graduates' data were collected on different dimensions – region-wise, HEIs category-wise (public/private), gender-wise, level-wise and subject-wise. The granular data of faculty members has been collected. Progressive figures for the higher education statistics 2022-23, including on-campus enrolment (region-wise, institute category, gender-wise), students graduated from universities (region-wise, institute category, gender-wise), and faculty (region-wise, institute category, degree level wise) are given in the following tables.

Enrolment (Public & Private) HEIs, Region and Sector-wise, 2022-23

Province	Sector	Female	Male	Total
AJ&K	Private	1,247	891	2,138
AJ&K	Public	15,344	12,988	28,332
Balochistan	Private	726	1,551	2,277
Balochistan	Public	12,700	28,080	40,780
Federal	Private	29,033	35,872	64,905
Federal	Public	294,862	332,212	627,074
Gilgit-Baltistan	Public	4,211	4,038	8,249
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Private	10,654	28,618	39,272
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Public	40,590	101,450	142,040

Punjab	Private	74,919	102,225	177,144
Punjab	Public	298,524	248,044	546,568
Sindh	Private	42,254	63,378	105,632
Sindh	Public	73,346	106,390	179,736
Grand Total		**898,410**	**1,065,737**	**1,964,147**

*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

Enrolment of HEIs, by Sector (Public/Private), 2022-23

Sector	Female	Male	Total
Private	158,833	232,535	391,368
Public	739,577	833,202	1,572,779
Grand Total	**898,410**	**1,065,737**	**1,964,147**

Enrolment (Public & Private) HEIs by Province, 2022-23

Province	Female	Male	Total
AJ&K	16,591	13,879	30,470
Balochistan	13,426	29,631	43,057
Federal	323,895	368,084	691,979
Gilgit-Baltistan	4,211	4,038	8,249
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	51,244	130,068	181,312
Punjab	373,443	350,269	723,712
Sindh	115,600	169,768	285,368
Grand Total	**898,410**	**1,065,737**	**1,964,147**

*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

Enrolment (Public & Private) HEIs, Region and Sector-wise Male/Female ratio, 2022-23

Province	Sector	Female	Male
AJ&K	Private	58.3%	41.7%
AJ&K	Public	54.2%	45.8%
Balochistan	Private	31.9%	68.1%
Balochistan	Public	31.1%	68.9%
Federal	Private	44.7%	55.3%
Federal	Public	47.0%	53.0%
Gilgit-Baltistan	Public	51.0%	49.0%
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Private	27.1%	72.9%
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Public	28.6%	71.4%

Punjab	Private	42.3%	57.7%
Punjab	Public	54.6%	45.4%
Sindh	Private	40.0%	60.0%
Sindh	Public	40.8%	59.2%
Grand Total		**45.7%**	**54.3%**

*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

Student Pass out (Public & Private) HEIs, Region and Sector-wise, 2022-23

Region	Sector	Female	Male	Total
AJ&K	Private	177	143	320
AJ&K	Public	2,979	2,514	5,493
Balochistan	Private	100	268	368
Balochistan	Public	2,634	4,419	7,053
Federal	Private	5,442	6,187	11,629
Federal	Public	108,184	97,385	205,569
Gilgit-Baltistan	Public	1,293	1,291	2,584
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Private	3,812	11,708	15,520
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Public	11,933	25,597	37,530
Punjab	Private	19,091	19,773	38,864
Punjab	Public	64,998	51,540	116,538
Sindh	Private	9,521	14,855	24,376
Sindh	Public	21,225	23,026	44,251
Grand Total		251,389	258,706	510,095

*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

Student Pass out (Public & Private) HEIs, Region and Sector-wise Male/Female ratio, 2022-23

Region	Sector	Female %	Male %
AJ&K	Private	55.3%	44.7%
AJ&K	Public	54.2%	45.8%
Balochistan	Private	27.2%	72.8%
Balochistan	Public	37.3%	62.7%
Federal	Private	46.8%	53.2%
Federal	Public	52.6%	47.4%
Gilgit-Baltistan	Public	50.0%	50.0%
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Private	24.6%	75.4%
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Public	31.8%	68.2%

Punjab	Private	49.1%	50.9%
Punjab	Public	55.8%	44.2%
Sindh	Private	39.1%	60.9%
Sindh	Public	48.0%	52.0%

*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

Faculty (Public and Private) HEIs, Region and Qualification-wise 2022-23

Provin	Sector	PhD			Non-PhD		
		Female	**Male**	**Total**	**Fe-male**	**Male**	**Total**
AJ&K	Private	3	28	31	54	98	152
AJ&K	Public	91	279	370	302	360	662
Balochistan	Private	4	39	43	41	70	111
Balochistan	Public	157	440	597	697	1,085	1,782
Federal	Private	173	469	642	1,529	1,370	2,899
Federal	Public	1,088	3,036	4,124	1,995	2,363	4,358
Gilgit-Baltistan	Public	8	91	99	46	88	134
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Private	61	480	541	512	1,156	1,668
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Public	635	2,383	3018	948	2,026	2,974
Punjab	Private	794	1,741	2,535	2,923	2,851	5,774
Punjab	Public	1,873	3,909	5,782	4,092	3,775	7,867
Sindh	Private	460	842	1,302	2,868	2,959	5,827
Sindh	Public	675	1,565	2,240	1,981	2,986	4,967
Total		**6,022**	**15,302**	**21,324**	**17,988**	**21,187**	**39,175**

*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

Faculty (Public and Private) HEIs, Region wise Male/Female Ratio 2022-23

Province	Sector	Female	Male
AJ&K	Private	31.1%	68.9%
AJ&K	Public	38.1%	61.9%
Balochistan	Private	29.2%	70.8%
Balochistan	Public	35.9%	64.1%
Federal	Private	48.1%	51.9%
Federal	Public	36.3%	63.7%
Gilgit-Baltistan	Public	23.2%	76.8%

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Private	25.9%	74.1%
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Public	26.4%	73.6%
Punjab	Private	44.7%	55.3%
Punjab	Public	43.7%	56.3%
Sindh	Private	46.7%	53.3%
Sindh	Public	36.9%	63.1%
Grand Total		39.7%	60.3%

*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

Faculty (Public and Private) HEIs, Region wise Non-PhD/PhD Ratio 2022-23

Province	Sector	Non-PhD	PhD
AJ&K	Private	83.1%	16.9%
AJ&K	Public	64.1%	35.9%
Balochistan	Private	72.1%	27.9%
Balochistan	Public	74.9%	25.1%
Federal	Private	81.9%	18.1%
Federal	Public	51.4%	48.6%
Gilgit-Baltistan	Public	57.5%	42.5%
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Private	75.5%	24.5%
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Public	49.6%	50.4%
Punjab	Private	69.5%	30.5%
Punjab	Public	57.6%	42.4%
Sindh	Private	81.7%	18.3%
Sindh	Public	68.9%	31.1%
Grand Total		64.8%	35.2%

*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

PhD Country Directory (PCD) and Pakistan Research Repository (PRR)

Information of all PhD degrees awarded by Pakistani universities since 1947 has been compiled in the form of PhD Country Directory (PCD), which can be accessed through HEC website: https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/students/PCD/Pages/PCD.aspx. The directory provides information about a registered PhD scholar including name of the scholar, subject, title, year of award of degree, name of supervisor and name of the institution. Additional information pertaining to the compliance of the minimum PhD criteria of Quality Assurance (QA) has been added in PCD. As of August

6, 2024, a total of 31,353 PhD scholars who graduated by the year 2022-23 have registered in PCD. Softcopies of full text theses are also being linked up and uploaded on Pakistan Research Repository, that can be viewed at http://prr.hec.gov.pk. There are 19,250 PhD dissertations uploaded on PRR for public access. These dissertations are searchable by subject, title, author, and issue date.

PhDs Produced by Pakistani HEIs (graduated till 2022-23), Discipline-wise and enlisted in PCD since 1947 till August 6, 2024*

Discipline	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences	2721	793	3514
Arts & Humanities	1993	948	2941
Biological & Medical Sciences	2834	2528	5362
Business Education	1205	497	1702
Engineering & Technology	1434	307	1741
Honorary	125	4	129
Physical Sciences	5118	2943	8061
Social Sciences	5282	2621	7903
Total	**20,712**	**10,641**	**31,353**

*The figures have been progressive

PhDs Produced by Region-wise as enlisted in PCD till 06th August, 2024*

Province	Male	Female	Total
AJK	129	81	210
Balochistan	119	47	166
Federal	4553	2428	6981
Gilgit-Baltistan	7		7
KPK	3521	940	4461
Punjab	8596	4728	13324
Sindh	3787	2417	6204

*The figures of are progressive

Higher Education Sector Expansion Over the Years

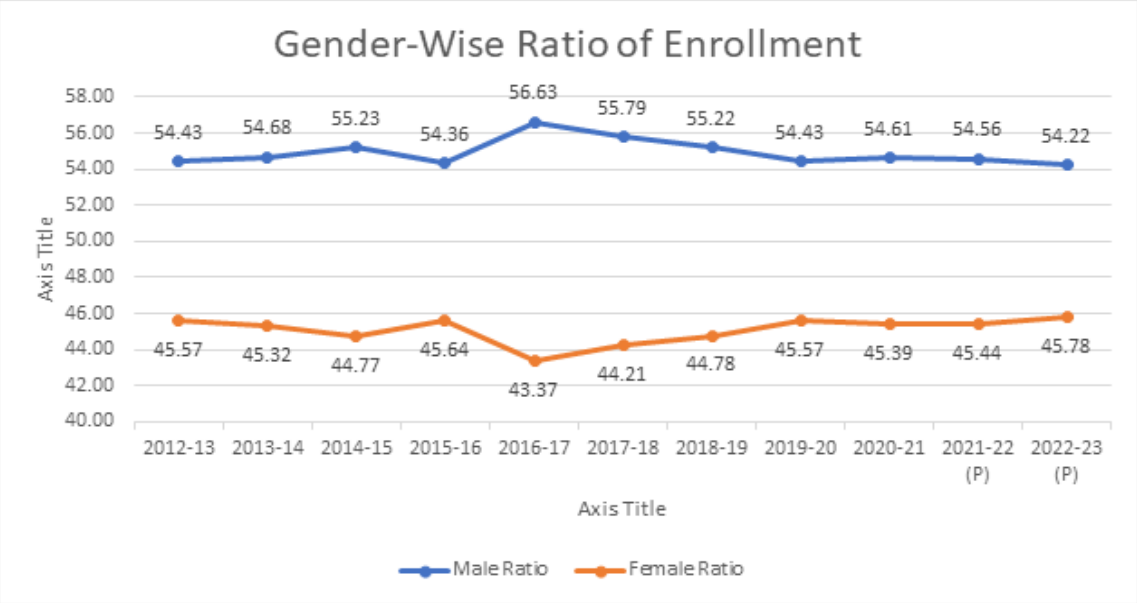
Higher Education Enrolment Growth

The section depicts the enrolment growth in Higher Education Sector over the years. The table-4.1 shows enrolment history over the last decade. The graph-4.1 shows enrolment gender-wise from 2012-13 to 2022-23.

Enrolment Over the Last Decade

Year	Male	Female	Total
2012-13	619,810	518,919	**1,138,729**
2013-14	676,575	560,795	**1,237,370**
2014-15	716,002	580,319	**1,296,321**
2015-16	757,423	636,002	**1,393,425**
2016-17	844,607	646,841	**1,491,448**
2017-18	881,964	698,904	**1,580,868**
2018-19	1,026,405	832,299	**1,858,704**
2019-20	1,088,136	913,559	**2,001,695**
2020-21	1,239,981	1,032,185	**2,272,166**
2021-22 (P)	1,051,904	888,204	**1,939,928**
2022-23 (P)	1,065,737	898,410	**1,964,147**

*FY 2021-22 and 2022-23 have been progressive. A decreasing trend in data was reported due to decline of enrolment figures of AIOU, Islamabad.

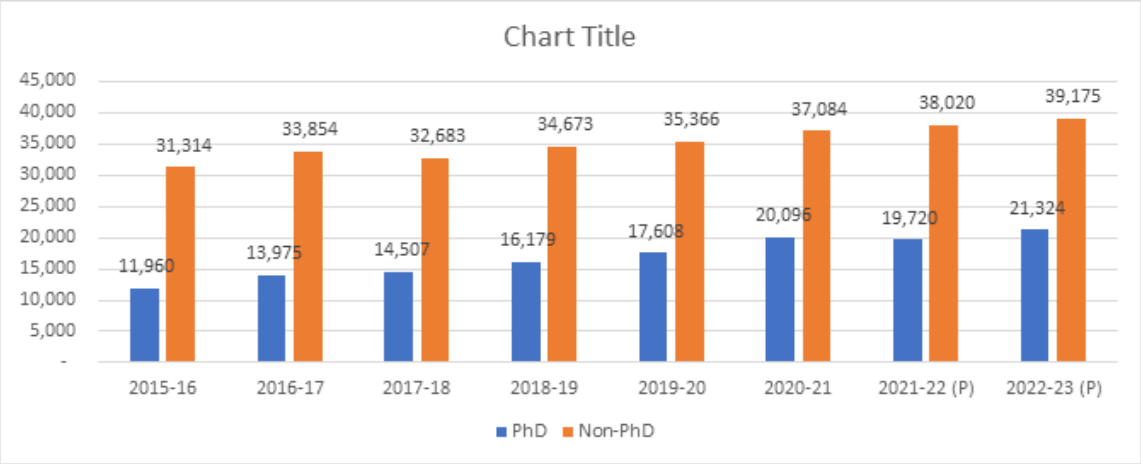


Gender-wise Enrollment in Percentage at HEIs over the Years

Teaching Faculty (PhD and Non-PhD) Growth Over the Years

In this section, teaching faculty growth over the years at all public and private HEIs has been depicted. The increase in teaching faculty both PhD and non-PhD over the years at all HEIs is shown in Graph-4.2.

PhD and Non-PhD Full Time Faculty Increase at HEIs Over the Years

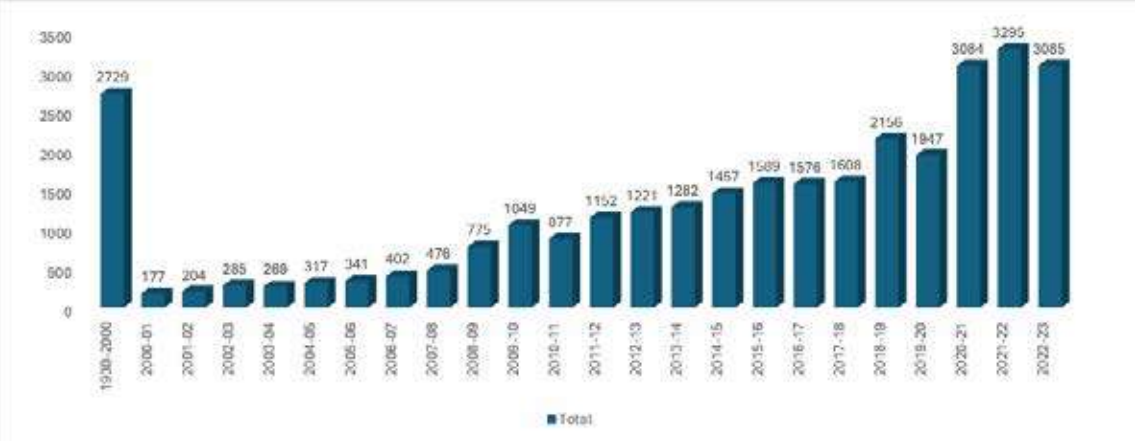


*FY 2022-23 has been progressive

PhDs Produced by HEIs and Registered in Pakistan Country Directory Over the Years

The following graph depicts the pattern of PhD scholars produced by HEIs year wise and were registered in PCD till year 2022-23*. The PCD registration of PhD scholars is continuing.

PhDs Produced by HEIs and Registered in PCD



*The figures are progressive

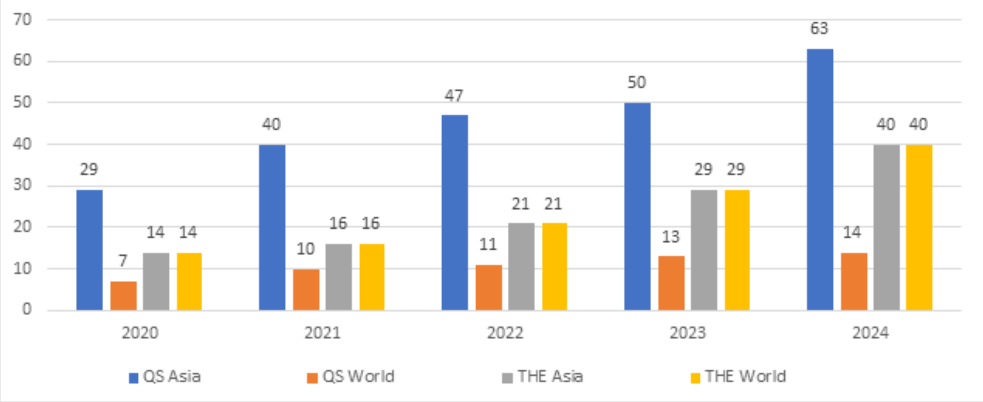
Growth of International Visibility of Pakistani HEIs Over Years

The Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings and QS World University Rankings are prestigious annual assessments that evaluate universities globally based on key performance indicators in teaching, research, citations, international outlook, and industry income. The rankings serve as a valuable resource for students, academics, and policymakers, highlighting the competitive landscape of higher education worldwide.

The following graph shows the increase of HEIs of Pakistan in two well-known international ranking systems. The graph shows pattern of participation of HEIs in both QS and

Times Higher Education (THE) World and Asian Rankings. The trend shows that participation over the years has grown in each ranking for World and Asian Rankings.

Growth of International Visibility of Pakistani HEIs Over the last five years (THE and QS Rankings)

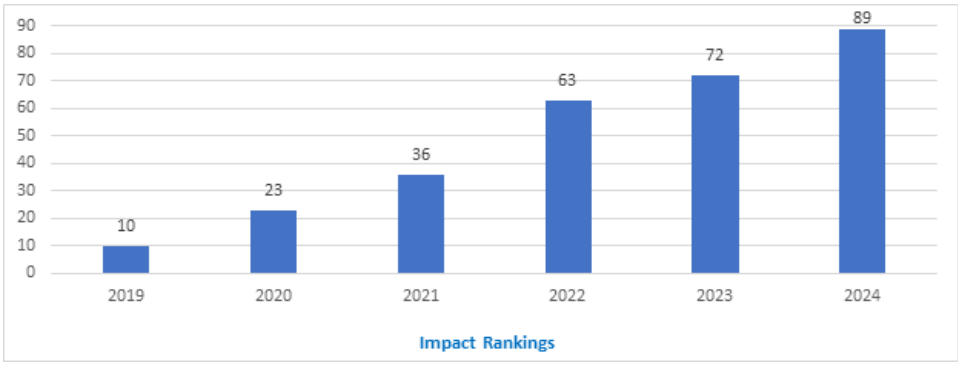


THE Impact Ranking of Pakistani HEIs the Over Years

The Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings assess universities' contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Launched in 2019, these rankings evaluate institutions based on their social and economic impact, focusing on various criteria aligned with 17 SDGs, such as quality education, gender equality, and climate action. Universities are scored on their performance in three main areas: research, outreach, and stewardship. The rankings encourage institutions to showcase their commitment to sustainability and social responsibility, providing a comprehensive view of their impact beyond traditional academic measures. The rankings have gained significant attention for promoting transparency and encouraging global collaboration towards sustainable development.

The following graph shows the increase of HEIs of Pakistan in THE impact ranking system.

Representation of Pakistani HEIs in THE's Impact Ranking Since 2019



Pakistani HEIs Comparison in the International Ranking with SAARC Countries

A comparative analysis has been carried out in the below table: -

#	Country	Total HEIs	HEIs Ranked in Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2023	Percentage of HEIs Ranked out of total HEIs (%)	Percentage of GDP for Education (%)	Source	HEIs Ranked in QS World University Ranking 2023	Percentage Of HEIs Ranked out of total HEIs (%)	Source
1	Pakistan	262	29	11.06	1.5	https://finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_24/10_education.pdf	13	4.96	https://hec.gov.pk/english/universities/pages/recognised.aspx
2	India	1164	101	8.67	6	https://prsindia.org/budgets/parliament/demand-for-grants-2022-23-analysis-education	41	3.52	https://www.ugc.ac.in/oldpdf/consolidated%20list%20of%20all%20universities.pdf
3	Iran	429 (as of 2022)	67	15.61	2.7 (2022)	https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=IR	6	1.39	https://www.msrt.ir/en/page/8/universities
4	Bangladesh	172	15	8.72	2.1	https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=BD	4	2.32	https://ugc.gov.bd
5	Sri Lanka	23	6	26.08	1.2 (2022)	https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=LK&most_recent_year_desc=false	2	8.69	https://www.ugc.ac.lk/index.php?option=com_university&view=list&Itemid=25&lang=en
6	Nepal	11	1	9.09	3.6 (2022)	https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=NP&most_recent_year_desc=false	0	0	https://www.ugcnepal.edu.np/frontpage/20
7	Bhutan	14	0	0	8.1 (2022)	https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=BT&most_recent_year_desc=false	0	0	http://www.dahe.gov.bt/index.php/tertiary-education-institutions-accredited/12-bhutan-accreditation-council/72-list-of-accredited-tertiary-education-institutions
8	Afghanistan	96	0	0	4.3 (2017)	https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS?locations=AF&most_recent_year_desc=false	0	0	https://www.4icu.org/af/
	Source		https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2023/world-ranking#				https://www.topuniversities.com/world-university-rankings/2023		

Research & Analysis
Activities Section

Research & Analysis Activities (R&AA) Section is assigned the execution of the following important tasks and policies.

1. Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (Pakistan Citizen Portal)
2. Policy on Drugs & Tobacco Abuse in Higher Education Institutions (2021)
3. Policy for Students with Disabilities at Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan (2021 Amended)
4. Policy on Protection against Sexual Harassment in HEIs (Revised January 2024)
5. HEC National Refund Policy (Revised 2024)
6. National Youth Helpline

The progress made against each task/policy is as under.

1. Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (Pakistan Citizen Portal)

Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (PMDU) is a pioneering nation-wide complaints and grievance redressal mechanism with special emphasis on facilitation of Pakistanis and foreigners. The primary objective of PMDU is to provide citizens with an opportunity to seamlessly communicate with all government entities and have their issues resolved with priority, in accordance with the government's vision.

PMDU enables the establishment of a culture of "Quantified Performance Management" and makes accountable various government entities including HEI for their mandated roles and responsibilities. Besides, the Unit puts forward recommendations for amendment and simplification of cumbersome official procedures as evidenced from the database for the purpose of assuring public facilitation.

HEC (R&AA) Section is tasked with assigning, monitoring and evaluating the dashboards entailing the complaints landing via Pakistan Citizen Portal regarding HEC Divisions and HEIs across the country.

During FY 2023-24, the progress regarding PCP complaints management remained as follows:

Sr.	Organisation	Total Complaints received	Total Complained Resolved
1	Higher Education Commission (HEC)	4226	4226
2	Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)	17946	17946
Grand Total		**22172**	**22172**

2. Policy on Drugs & Tobacco Abuse in Higher Education Institutions (2021)

Drug abuse and smoking pose serious risks to human health and the socio-economic life of the community coupled with the environmental costs. Drug and Tobacco Abuse Policy was made keeping in mind the national and provincial legislations on drug and tobacco use, including the Drugs Act, 1976, the Control of Narcotics Substances Act XXV, 1997, the Drug Regulatory Act, 2012, and the Prohibition of Smoking in

Enclosed Places and Protection of Non-smokers Health Ordinance, 2002 (Ordinance No. LXXIV of 2002). Therefore, like all other institutions, universities have a legal responsibility to implement all relevant national laws and policies and should join hands with all stakeholders including psychologists and psychiatrists, social workers, NGOs, and others to address the problem of unlawful drug and tobacco abuse. This policy was circulated and is equally applicable to all public and private HEIs in the country.
This policy covers all public and private sector HEIs and is applicable to students, faculty, staff and visitors (including individuals associated with outsourced services) on the premises of HEIs (campus, classrooms, hostels, playgrounds, libraries, laboratories, cafeterias and transport facility, etc.).

During FY 2023-24, progress remained as follows:

SR	Total Number of HEIs	**Number of HEIs Adopted**	Number of Awareness Programmes Conducted	Number of Monitoring isits of HEIs
1	264	224	27	27

The following is the pictorial presentation of different awareness/monitoring visits regarding the aforesaid policy:



3. Policy for Students with Disabilities at Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan (2021 Amended)

Pakistan is a partner in the global movement for the socio-economic well-being of persons with disabilities, having signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and adopted the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 agenda. HEC is committed to the objective that no one should be denied access to higher education in Pakistan, which includes ensuring that people with disabilities have equal opportunities to access and attain higher education. Being the cognizant of the importance of the role of people with disabilities in society, HEC formulated a policy for students with disabilities at HEIs which aims to create an enabling environment for inclusive education in colleges and universities and facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in all academic and extra-curricular aspects of college and university education.
The policy recognises that disability covers a wide range of impairments and different disabilities can have varying impacts on study, work, and other aspects of life, war-

ranting special considerations by HEIs.
To facilitate the students with disabilities, the policy provides a forum, i.e., the Accessibility Committee. Every higher education institution must adopt the policy and establish a Standing Accessibility Committee comprising five members to be appointed by Vice Chancellor/Rector of the respective HEI.
During FY 2023-24, progress regarding the policy implementation remained as follows:

S. No.	Total Number of HEIs	Number HEIs that Implemented the Policy
1	264	182

4. Policy on Protection against Sexual Harassment in HEIs (Revised January 2024)

HEC has been mandated by law to prescribe conditions under which HEIs in the country may be opened and operated. They have the rights to take serious steps to ensure the freedom of teachers, researchers, scholars, students and other members to live and work in a safe environment in which their dignity and self-esteem is protected.
The goal of this policy is to prevent sexual harassment from taking place, and where necessary to act upon complaints of sexual harassment promptly, fairly, judiciously and with due regard to confidentiality for all parties concerned. This policy is consistent with and has been made considering the provisions of the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010 (as amended) (the "2010 Harassment Act"). It extends the protection against sexual harassment to all members of the HEI community and provides the option to aggrieved persons to seek recourse to resources and justice within the HEI or to seek redressal through provisions of the 2010 Act.
The policy was updated and revised in January 2024. The jurisdiction of the policy was extended as transgender persons were included in its domain.
During FY 2023-24, progress regarding implementation, in addition to the number of cases reported, remained as follows:

SR	Total Number of HEIs	Number HEIs Adopted	Number of Cases Reported	Number of Cases Resolved	Cases under Process
1	264	183	11	7	04

5. HEC National Fee Refund Policy 2024

Pursuant to the powers granted to HEC under the HEC Ordinance, 2002, the HEC's governing body, i.e., the Commission, in its 27th meeting, held on August 27, 2012 at HEC Islamabad, approved the National Level Fee Refund Policy 2012. The Policy was formulated by "Vice Chancellors' Committee" constituted by Chairman HEC in compliance with the order of Islamabad High Court.
Keeping in view the changes in fee structure along with complaints received from various students, a committee comprising heads of HEIs from both the public and private sectors revisited the existing policy in its meeting in 2015 at HEC and unanimously agreed on a one-page revised policy 2015.
However, due to the changed socio-economic dynamics, HEC constituted a commit-

tee to revisit the existing Fee Refund Policy 2015 and formulate a comprehensive Refund Policy 2024, while according due consideration to both the stakeholders, i.e., HEIs and students.
Resultantly, the HEC National Fee Refund Policy 2024 was formulated and was floated for the approval of the HEC Commission.

6. National Youth Helpline

Under the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, National Youth Helpline with a toll-free number 0800-69457 was launched at HEC Secretariat on November 1, 2022 to provide psychosocial support and counseling to young people.
The helpline is aimed at providing a secure and confidential gateway to access information about problems linked to adolescence, particularly related to counseling for psychosocial issues, career advancement and reproductive health challenges.
Currently, the initiative is a collaborative effort made under the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, wherein HEC, United Nations Family Planning Association, and ACT International must extend psychosocial support to the youth facing multifarious challenges regarding mental health.

During FY 2023-24, progress remained as follows:

S. R	Title of Event	Venue	Dates
1	One-Day Seminar for National Youth Helpline	University of the Punjab	November 16, 2023
2	One-Day Seminar for National Youth Helpline	Dawood University of Engineering Technology Karachi	November 30, 2023
3	One-Day Seminar for National Youth Helpline	Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad	December 21, 2023

Total Calls Received: From January to December 2023, the helpline received a total of 8,737 calls, indicating a sustained need for counseling and support services among youth. These calls covered a broad spectrum of concerns.

Gender Distribution of Callers:

- **Males:** 53% (4,647 callers)
- **Females:** 46% (4,041 callers)
- **Transgender Individuals:** 1% (70 callers)

The relatively balanced distribution of male and female callers illustrates that the helpline is successfully reaching a wide demographic, while the presence of transgender callers reflects its inclusivity.

Call Breakdown by Issue:

1. **Psychosocial Issues:** A significant majority, 6,857 callers, reached out with concerns related to psychosocial issues. These could include relationship difficul-

ties, emotional distress, and social challenges.

2. **Reproductive Health Issues:** 640 calls were related to reproductive health, reflecting ongoing youth concerns about sexual health, contraception, and related matters.
3. **Educational Concerns:** 1,053 callers contacted the helpline with academic and educational issues, highlighting the pressure and challenges students face.
4. **Other Mental Health Issues and Helpline Information:** 2,481 individuals called seeking information about mental health or general helpline services, showing an interest in understanding available resources.

Referrals: Out of the total calls received, the helpline made 239 referrals to appropriate services, accounting for approximately 3% of total calls. These referrals were made to address cases requiring specialized attention, including counseling, medical care, or further intervention. Notably, 34 cases were referred to reproductive health services, indicating the specialized nature of these referrals.

Data Summary in Table Form:

Category	Number of Calls	Percentage of Total Calls
Total Calls Received	8,737	100%
Gender Distribution		
Males	4,647	53%
Females	4,041	46%
Transgender	70	1%
Call Breakdown by Issue		
Psychosocial Issues	6,857	78.50%
Reproductive Health Issues	640	7.30%
Educational Concerns	1,053	12.10%
Mental Health Issues/Helpline Info	2,481	28.40%
Referrals Made	239	3%
Referrals to Reproductive Health	34	14.2% of referrals

Stakeholder Engagement:

Positive Feedback: There are video testimonials and enthusiastic responses from stakeholders and universities. Pictures of stakeholders are attached below. The feedback of audiences can be checked through this link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1RmUJDx1ZPDsoTuCJRvb9bBRKhkg9kMPC?usp=sharing



Expanded Reach: Engagement with 46 Youth Development Centres across Pakistan 46 Youth Development Centres specially from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan, and Azad Jammu & Kashmir.


19 years old Sara from Islamabad suffering from pubertal issues with low self esteem.
"I am very satisfied by the counseling services of NYHL"
24 years old Ali from Lahore suffering depression with educational issues.
I can't thank the helpline enough for guiding me through my struggles. It has been a life changing experience


24 years Rehana from Isb. I recently call NYHL to seek support and guidance regarding Gender based Violence (GBV).
I must say that the services provided were exceptional.
22 years old Faiza from KWP. The NYHL was my lifeline in my battle against addiction offering un-wavering support and resources that ultimately helped me break free from its grip.


INTERACTIV
NYHL Promotional Activity at 5th


Attending 5th International





Global Engagement

Visit of UK Higher Education Leaders

The Pak-UK Education Gateway is a partnership between Higher Education Commission (HEC) and British Council, aimed at enhancing human resource and knowledge capital through improvement of higher education and development of skills in Pakistan. The joint programme, Pak-UK Education Gateway, seeks to strengthen relations between the education sectors of Pakistan and the United Kingdom.
In April (21-27) 2024, a high level 21-member delegation of UK higher education leaders, led by Sir Steve Smith, the UK Government's International Education Champion, visited Pakistan. The visit began with the Pakistan-UK Vice Chancellors Forum held at the HEC auditorium, where the revised Foreign Collaboration/Trans-National Education Policy was launched. The delegation also had a meeting with the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Throughout the week, the delegation visited various universities in Islamabad, Haripur and Lahore, fostering collaboration and partnership in higher education.





Visit of Syrian Ministry of Education and Higher Education Officials to Pakistan

A six-member delegation from Syrian, led by Syrian Deputy Minister of Education and Educational Affairs, visited Pakistan from May 2-8, 2024. Pakistan's Deputy Head of Mis-

sion Mr. Umar Hayat Khan also accompanied the delegation. The delegation called on Pakistan's Federal Minister of Education and Professional Training. Besides, the delegation had engagements with Chairman HEC, HEC's Senior Management Committee, and Secretary Ministry Science and Technology during the visit.



At HEC, discussions were held on mutual interests and potential areas for bilateral collaboration. Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed highlighted that since its establishment in 2002, HEC has been focused on improving access, relevance, and quality in higher education, with significant government investments leading to international recognition for many universities. The Chairman affirmed HEC's readiness to support Syrian higher education institutions in policy formulation, faculty capacity building, skill development, IT, and other areas.



Dr. Rami Waheed Al-Dhulli, head of the Syrian delegation, expressed gratitude for HEC's support and emphasised the desire to develop bilateral academic and research relations, particularly in professional education, IT, entrepreneurship, technology, and modern teaching methods.



Furthermore, the delegation also visited the higher education institutions in Islamabad, Lahore and Faisalabad to familiarise with the state of development and the strengths of Pakistani higher education sector and to identify areas of mutual collaboration in the domain of higher education.



COMSATS, National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST), and Bahria university shared their draft Memoranda of Understanding to affirm the partnership with Syrian counterparts.

Air University offered assistance in the form of training programmes under its Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for capacity building of faculty and staff in technology and other disciplines

During the delegation's visit to University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, the Syrian dignitaries had the opportunity to visit:

- The National Institute of Food Science & Technology
- Visit to US-Pakistan Centre for Advanced Studies in Agriculture & Food Security
- The Institute of Horticulture Sciences



CPEC Academic Research and Development Unit, Global Engagement

Preamble

The reporting year 2023-24 witnessed a number of activities under the auspices of the PC-1 entitled "Academic Collaboration Under CPEC Consortium of Universities," besides a series of events organised by the China Study Centres and universities for celebration of the **"Decade of CPEC"** from June 21, 2023 to July 15, 2023. Some important facets designed to promote academic collaboration between Pakistan and China are highlighted in this report.

Joint Research Projects under CPEC Collaborative Research Grant

A total of 266 project proposals were received and evaluated in response to the first call for proposals. Despite a target of 20 projects, only 13 projects (worth Rs. 350 million) were approved for funding in June 2021. These projects were monitored during the year and their progress reports were evaluated for disbursement of subsequent installments. Their progress has been steady and satisfactory.
The second call for proposals was issued for award of the remaining seven projects. A total of 191 proposals were received. After an elaborate process of evaluation, nine projects worth Rs. 140 million were approved for funding. The time duration of these projects is up to 24 months.

China Study Centres

China Study Centres were established in six universities across the country in 2021—IBA Karachi, BUITEMS, Quetta; UET Lahore; NUST Islamabad; University of Peshawar, and Karakoram International University, Gilgit -- after a stringent competitive selection process. They were to be funded for three years which ended in June 2024. Despite COVID 19-related challenges, the Centres acquitted themselves admirably well, especially during the celebration of the Decade of CPEC.

Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

A total of 13 events were planned and approved for funding. Seven have already been organised, including two held during this reporting year.

Placement of Pakistani/Chinese Students/Scholars in China/Pakistan for Six Months

Calls for Study Abroad/Placement in China/Pakistan were issued during April 2024. A total 606 applications have been received for study abroad in China, which are being processed. Efforts are in hand to attract Chinese scholars as well.

Post-doctoral Fellowships in China/Pakistan

A portal is being developed to process the applications.

Participation in Conferences and Seminars

Director General CPEC participated in eight CPEC-related conferences to highlight historical linkages between China and Pakistan, academic collaboration and opportunities under CPEC.

Training and Talent Cultivation

A cohort of 17 faculty and staff members was sent to China for training at Nanjing, Shanghai and Beijing from April 14-26, 2024. The visit of another group is being coordinated with the Chinese counterparts.





Publication

Director General CPEC published a book entitled "101 Chinese Poems". It is a rhymed translation of selected 101 Chinese poems into English and Urdu.



Preparation of Documentary

The CPEC Unit prepared a documentary to showcase its major achievements and activities.

Coordination and Parliamentary Business

Coordination and Parliamentary Business

The Coordination Division of Higher Education Commission (HEC) has been actively engaged in a large number of coordination activities. Some salient functions that the Division carried out in the financial year 2023-24 include:

Commission Meetings

The Division held four meetings of the Commission. In addition, two agenda items of the Commission viz. 9th and 10th meetings, were processed via Circulation respectively on August 30, 2023 and April 29, 2023. The Division organized 9th urgent meeting of the Commission on November 13, 2023, in addition to 10th urgent Commission meeting on June 4, 2024, 42nd regular meeting on October 23, 2023, and 43rd regular meeting on June 29, 2024.

Vice Chancellors' Committee

During the year, three Vice Chancellors' Committee meetings were held. The 51st meeting was held on September 8, 2023; 52nd meeting on March 20-21, 2024; and the 53rd VCs Committee meeting was organised on June 29, 2024.

Senior Management Committee

In the year under review, the Division arranged 18 meetings of the Senior Management Committee.

Nominations for Statutory Bodies of HEIs

The Division processed 633 cases of nominations on statutory bodies of the HEIs during the FY 2023-24.

Events

Coordination Division led arrangements, or provided support, for five major events organised or facilitated by HEC, including:

- Recording of Hum TV special programme, 'Subha se Agay': Support was provided to the team of HUM TV for recording an episode of a Special Program with name "Subha Say Agay". The programme topic was harassment at educational institutions, wherein various kinds of harassment were highlighted, guiding victims what should they know and do. Besides, the programme also shed light on legislation against harassment and measures taken to prevent harassment in institutions. Students and faculty from HEIs of Islamabad/ Rawalpindi attended the session in the HEC Auditorium, Islamabad.

- Ministry of IT and Telecom organized an event, Tech Destination Pakistan, at Jinnah Convention Centre, Islamabad. The Division provided support the Ministry in inviting all HEIs located in Islamabad/Rawalpindi to attend the event.
- HEC organised National Youth Convention at Jinnah Convention Centre, Islamabad. The worthy Chairman HEC along with other dignitaries graced the event. Students and faculty from different regions, across the country, attended the event.
- Kashmir Solidarity Day Programmes held at Lok Virsa Complex, Shakarparian by the Ministry of Federal Educational and Professional Training. HEC assisted the Ministry and invited students and faculty of HEIs for the event.
- HEC organised the launching event of the "Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative" in collaboration with the British Council under the GYM project. Students and faculty from HEIs of Islamabad and Rawalpindi attended the session in the HEC Auditorium.

Summaries for Prime Minister

The Division processed six summaries for the Prime Minister on matters pertaining to HEC, in addition to processing of three summaries on issues related to higher education institutions.

Right to Information

Coordination Division successly dealt with and got closed 17 Right to Information Appeals filed in Pakistan Information Commission against HEC.

PMDU Complaints

During the year, the Division responded to 44 complaints on Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (PMDU). pertaining to Coordination Division were responded on PMDU.

Prime Minister Directives

The Division processed 16 directives of the Prime Minister of Pakistan in the FY 2023-24.

Other Activities

The other activities carried out by the Division in the reporting year included preparation of Draft Statutes of Emergency Committee of Federal Urdu University of Arts, Sciences and Technology (FUUAST) and vetted Draft Statutes of National Skills University (NSU).

Parliamentary Business

The Parliamentary Business Section is a part of the HEC Coordination Division. The tasks performed by the Section during the FY 2023-24 are tabulated as follows:

Sr. No.	Assignment	Number
1.	Briefs for Senate Standing Committee with translation	14
2.	Briefs for National Assembly Standing Committee with translation	8
3.	National Assembly Starred Questions with translation	21
4.	National Assembly Un-Starred Questions with translation	12
5.	Senate Starred Questions with translation	30
6.	Senate Un-starred Questions with translation	11
7.	Compliance Reports on Recommendations of Senate Standing Committees	12
8.	Compliance Reports on Recommendations of National Assembly Standing Committees	5
9.	Senate Bills	16
10.	National Assembly Bills	12
11.	Senate Calling Attention Notices	18
12.	National Assembly Calling Attention Notices	9
13.	National Assembly Motions	12
14.	Senate Resolutions	10
15.	National Assembly Resolutions	10
16.	Senate Orders of the Day	16
17.	National Assembly Orders of the Day	11
18.	Senate Rota Days	13
19.	National Assembly Rota Days	11

Besides, the Section organised/attended numerous briefings to Chairman and Executive Director HEC, in addition to holding and attending a large number of Parliamentary and Ministerial Briefings as well as seminars and conferences inside and outside HEC.

Sports & Co-curricular Activities Division

Pakistan University Sports Board (PUSB)

Pakistan University Sports Board (PUSB) deals with sports matters for tertiary level students (men and women) of higher education institutions (HEIs)/universities and affiliated colleges/institutions across the country. Recently, the PUSB constitution and its Rules-2024 have been revised with the consultation of all concerned stakeholders. PUSB in collaboration with HEIs/universities regularly organises Intervarsity Championships for university students each year, also provides opportunities to student players to represent in various national level championships in addition to supporting HEIs/universities in building and maintaining their sports infrastructure.

HEC has notified the amended PUSB Constitution and Rules-2024, indicating a strengthened commitment to promoting university sports in the country.

The amendments, notified with effect from August 23, 2024, were approved during 16th Meeting of PUSB/52nd Vice Chancellors Committee meeting held on March 21, 2024 and subsequently endorsed by the Commission in its 43rd meeting held on June 29, 2024.

The PUSB board members include Executive Director HEC, Director General Pakistan Sports Board, and Vice Chancellors of both public and private sector universities, fostering a liaison among sports governing body and academic institutions.

The prominent amendments are related to incentivising players and officials for strengthening university sports structure. Also, the amended constitution establishes a medical commission to safeguard well-being of students.

Meeting of Standing Sub-Committee of PUSB

The 57th meeting of Standing Sub-Committee of PUSB was held in September 2023. The Directors/Managers Sports of public and private sector HEIs/universities from all provinces attended the meeting. Mr. Javed Ali Memon, Director/In-charge Sports & Co-Curricular Activities Division, HEC chaired the meeting. Every year, a meeting of Standing Sub-Committee is conducted to effectively plan the execution of overall activities of PUSB in line with national championships/games and international championships.





It was decided that during Standing Sub-Committee of PUSB, a recognition ceremony for outstanding performers of 34th National Games, Quetta would be held in which prize money and scholarships would be given to the students.

A prize distribution ceremony to recognise outstanding student players of 34th National Games, Quetta 2023 was also held during the PUSB Standing Sub-Committee meeting. Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Mr. Madad Ali Sindhi was Chief Guest of the ceremony, whereas Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed was the Guest of Honor. The ceremony was attended by former Olympians Khwaja Junaid and Shahbaz Ahmad, CEO Lahore Qalandars Mr. Atif Rana, Director/ In-charge Sports & Co-Curricular Activities Division, HEC Mr. Javed Ali Memon and student players from various universities who have got medals in 34th National Games, Quetta 2023.

Intervarsity Zonal Championships (Men) 2023-24

The Intervarsity Zonal Championships (Men) 2023-24 were organised at multiple universities across the country. The aim of conducting zonal championships is to provide opportunity of participation to maximum students, studying in the universities.
The details of Intervarsity Zonal Championships (Men) are as follows:

Zone	Event	Organizing HEI(s)	Starting date
A	Volleyball	Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan	September 24, 2023
B		Sarhad University of Science & Information Technology, Peshawar	September 20, 2023
C		Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan	September 20, 2023
D		Bahria University, Islamabad	September 20, 2023
E		National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad	September 21, 2023
F		University of the Punjab, Lahore	September 21, 2023
G		University of Central Punjab, Lahore	September 20, 2023
H		University of Management & Technology, Lahore	September 23, 2023
I		Thal University, Bhakkar	September 22, 2023
J		Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture, Multan	September 20, 2023
K		Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam	September 21, 2023
L		Hamdard University, Karachi	September 25, 2023
M		Sir Syed University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi	September 20, 2023

A	Table Tennis	Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan	November 2, 2023
B		Sarhad University of Science & Information Technology, Peshawar	November 2, 2023
C		University of Swabi	November 2, 2023
D		Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology, Islamabad	November 2, 2023
E		HITEC University, Taxila	November 2, 2023
F		University of Gujrat	November 2, 2023
G		Beaconhouse National University, Lahore	November 2, 2023
H		University of Education, Lahore	November 1, 2023
I		University of Mianwali	October 26, 2023
J		Cholistan University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Bahawalpur	November 2, 2023
K		Shaheed Allah Buksh University of Art, Design and Heritages, Jamshoro	November 2, 2023
L		Iqra University, Karachi	November 2, 2023
M		Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi	November 2, 2023
N		Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water & Marine Sciences, Uthal	November 2, 2023
A	Badminton	Kohat University of Science & Technology, Kohat	December 20, 2023
B		University of Peshawar	
C		University of Swabi	
D		Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad	
E		PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi	
F		Government College University, Lahore	
G		Minhaj University, Lahore	
H		University of Education, Lahore	
I		National Textile University, Faisalabad	
J		Khawaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan	
K		Quaid-e-Awam University of Engineering, Sciences & Technology, Nawab Shah	
L		Sindh Madressatul Islam University, Karachi	
M		Institute of Business Management, Karachi	

A	Basketball	Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan	November 20, 2023
B		University of Peshawar	
C		University of Haripur	
D		National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad	
E		University of Engineering and Technology, Taxila	
F		Superior University, Lahore	
G		University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Lahore	
H		Lahore School of Economics, Lahore	
I		University of Agriculture, Faisalabad	
J		Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan	
K		Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro	
L		Iqra University, Karachi	
M		Karachi Institute of Economics and Technology, Karachi	
N		Balochistan University of Information Technology and Management Sciences, Quetta	
A	Football	Kohat University of Science and Technology, Kohat	November 25, 2023
B		Islamia College University, Peshawar	
C		Pak-Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Haripur	
D		Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad	
E		PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi	
F		University of the Punjab, Lahore	
G		University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Lahore	
H		University of Management & Technology, Lahore	
I		University of Sargodha	
J		Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture, Multan	
K		Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Medical University, Larkana	
L		University of Karachi	February 20, 2024
M		NED University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi	November 25, 2023
N		Balochistan University of Engineering and Technology, Khuzdar	December 5, 2023
C	Cricket	Hazara University, Mansehra	November 13, 2024

A	Hockey	Kohat University of Science and Technology, Kohat	May 23, 2024
B		Islamia College University, Peshawar	
C		University of Engineering and Technology, Mardan	
D		FAST National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences, Islamabad	
E		National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad	
F		Government College University, Lahore	
G		University of Central Punjab, Lahore	
H		University of Management and Technology, Lahore	
I		Government College University, Faisalabad	
J		The Islamia University of Bahawalpur	
K		The Aror University of Art, Architecture, Design and Heritage, Rohri, Sukkur	
L	Hockey	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Dewan University, Karachi	
M		Sir Syed University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi	

Intervarsity Final Round Championships (Men) 2023-24

The details of Intervarsity Final Round Championships (Men) 2023-24 of different sports events are as follows:

Sr. No.	Sports	Organizing University	Starting Date
1	45th Volleyball	University of Engineering & Technology, Taxila	January 10, 2023
2	21st Kabaddi (Circle Style)	Khawaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan	October 29, 2023
3	45th Athletics	University of Peshawar	November 18, 2023
4	44th Table Tennis	Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur	November 25, 2023
5	43rd Swimming	Govt. College University, Lahore	January 12, 2023
6	25th Shooting	Lahore Garrison University, Lahore	February 12, 2023
7	14th Cycling	The Superior College, Lahore	December 16, 2023
8	46th Squash	National University of Sciences & Technology, Islamabad	December 19, 2023
9	25th Boxing	Benazir Bhutto Shaheed University, Lyari	December 20, 2023
10	15th Karate	University of Karachi	December 27, 2023
11	13th Rugby	University of Lahore	August 1, 2024
12	38th Bodybuilding	University of Education, Lahore	January 13, 2024
13	16th Chess	Liaquat University of Medical Health Sciences, Jamshoro	January 14, 2024

14	39th Wrestling	University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Lahore	February 19, 2024
15	45th Football	University of Sargodha	April 22, 2024
16	20th Gymnastic	Govt. College University, Lahore	January 16, 2024
17	12th Baseball	Emerson College University, Multan	September 2, 2024
18	19th Judo	The Islamia University of Bahawalpur	April 24, 2024
19	41st Tennis	Pak-Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Mang, Haripur	June 2, 2024
20	34th Handball	University of Agriculture Faisalabad	May 20, 2024
21	17th Tug of War	Islamia College University, Peshawar	February 26, 2024
22	45th Badminton	University of Management & Technology, Lahore	January 25, 2024
23	12th Taekwondo	National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences, Islamabad	September 5, 2024
24	37th Weightlifting	Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam	April 25, 2024
25	19th Rowing	University of Lahore	April 6, 2024
26	45th Hockey	University of Central Punjab, Lahore	February 6, 2024

Intervarsity Championships (Women) 2023-24

The Intervarsity Championships (Women) 2022-23 organised by multiple HEIs/universities of different sports events were held across Pakistan.
The details are as follows:

Sr. No.	Sports	Organizing University	Starting Date
1	10th Squash	Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar	November 17, 2023
2	40th Table Tennis	University of Sargodha	November 29, 2023
3	45th Athletics	University of the Punjab, Lahore	November 20, 2023
4	12th Swimming	Government College University, Lahore	December 1, 2023
5	10th Shooting	NED University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi	December 8, 2023
6	2nd Boxing		December 20, 2023
7	10th Karate	Dow University of Health Sciences, Karachi	December 27, 2023
8	11th Basketball	Lahore Collage for Women University, Lahore	January 3, 2024
9	11th Cycling	Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore	January 17, 2024
10	45th Volleyball	University of Home Economics, Lahore	June 10, 2024
11	14th Football	The Islamia University of Bahawalpur	May 29, 2024
12	11th Judo	Lahore Collage for Women University Lahore	February 1, 2024

13	11th Taekwondo	Lahore Garrison University, Lahore	February 22, 2024
14	11th Baseball	Government College Women University, Faisalabad	February 18, 2024
15	34th Handball	Government College for Women University, Sialkot	March 5, 2024
16	16th Cricket	Institute of Business Administration, Karachi	March 4, 2024
17	46th Badminton	Iqra University, Karachi	January 30, 2024
18	45th Tennis	International Islamic University, Islamabad	June 6, 2024
19	2nd Weightlifting	Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam	April 25, 2024
20	1st Wrestling	MNS University of Agriculture, Multan	May 28, 2024
21	40th Hockey	The Superior University, Lahore	May 25, 2024
22	8th Chess	Rawalpindi Women University, Rawalpindi	May 10, 2024
23	10th Rowing	University of Lahore	June 9, 2024

HEC Participation in National Championships

HEC teams participated in various National Championships during the year 2023-24. The details along with the achievements are as follows:

Sr. No.	Event Name	Manager	Results
1	National Volleyball Championship for Men (October 11-17, 2023 at Quetta)	University of Engineering and Technology, Taxila	Nil
2	Combaxx 5th Asian Open International Taekwondo Championship for Men (October 31 to November 5, 2023 at Islamabad)	FAST National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences, Islamabad	1 Silver 2 Bronze
3	Combaxx 5th Asian Open International Taekwondo Championship for Women (October 31 to November 5, 2023 at Islamabad)	Lahore Garrison University, Lahore.	2 Silver 3 Bronze
4	51st National Athletics Championship for Men (December 8-10, 2023 at Attock)	University of Peshawar	Junior 4 Gold 4 Silver 9 Bronze Senior 2 Gold 2 Silver 6 Bronze

7	51st National Athletics Championship for Women (December 8-10, 2023 at Attock)	University of the Punjab	Junior 8 Gold 7 Silver 6 Bronze Senior 4 Gold 10 Silver 6 Bronze
8	CNS National Shooting Championship for Men (December 16-24, 2023 at Karachi)	Lahore Garrison University, Lahore.	2 Silver 3 Bonze
9	CNS National Shooting Championship for Women (December 16-24, 2023 at Karachi)	NED University, Karachi	5 Silver 4 Bonze
10	59th National Table Tennis Championships for Men (December 8-13, 2023, at Lahore)	Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur.	1 Silver 2 Bronze
11	59th National Table Tennis Championships for Men (December 8-13, 2023, at Lahore)	University of Sargodha	1 Bronze
12	16th National Karate Championship for Women (January 26-28, 2024 at Karachi)	Dow University, Karachi /NED University	4 Silver 2 Bronze
13	30th National Karate Championship for Men (January 26-28, 2024 at Karachi)	University of Karachi	3 Bronze
14	71st National MR & JR MR Pakistan Bodybuilding Championship (January 25-27, 2024 at Lahore)	University of Education, Lahore	Junior 1 Gold 2 Silver 3 Bronze
15	18th National Baseball Championship for Women (February 29-March 3, 2024 at Lahore)	Government College Women University, Faisalabad	Bronze
16	43rd National Kabaddi Championship for Men (February 28- March 3, 2024)	University of Central Punjab, Lahore.	4th
17	President Cup One day 2023-24 (April 24-May 12, 2024)	COMSATS University of Information Technology, Islamabad	Silver

HEC Qualified for PCB's Grade I Cricket Tournament

HEC has qualified for participation in the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Grade-I Cricket tournament. For the first time, the HEC team took part in the President Trophy (First Class) and President Cup (One Day) among the top eight domestic teams.
Previously, the HEC team has been playing Grade II level cricket tournament and based on its performance has qualified for Grade I cricket, which is one of the premier domestic tournaments.



PCB considered HEC for participation in Grade-I Cricket owing to its performance in the Grade II tournament (Patron's Trophy) 2018-19 wherein HEC clinched 2nd position. In the President Cup (One Day) HEC team stood runner-up among the top-8 teams of the country. HEC has been promoting cricket in universities by regularly organising cricket tournaments among university students.

Medals Summary: 2023-24 (Up to June 2024)

Participation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total Medal
15 National (10 Men & 5 Women)	17 W 7 M	25 W 9 M	21 W 26 M	63 39
2 International (Men & Women)	-	2 W 1 M	3 W 2 M	5 3
Grand Total:	24	37	52	113

HEC Sports Scholarships

HEC provides scholarships to national level medalist student players in various sports.

Talent Hunt Youth Sports League

The project caters the identification of aspiring players of aged 15-25 years in 12 selected sports through open trials at 25 locations across the country including Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and Sindh, whereas, the departmental players are not allowed to participate in these trials. HEC is executing the project under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP). PMYP envisions empowering and developing youth through its 4-E framework, i.e., Education, Employment, Engagement, and Environment.

This project aligns with the engagement pillar by promoting healthy physical activity through sports and providing opportunities for youth to pursue professional sports careers, thereby creating employment opportunities. Through the project, over 100,900 aspiring players have been engaged so far. The details are as follows:

Sr. No.	Sports	Male	Female	Total	Remarks
1.	Football	17,745	2,514	20,259	Trials, Provincials and National Leagues are already Completed
2.	Badminton	8,838	5,327	14,165	
3.	Hockey	6,592	4,224	10,816	
4.	Volleyball	4,791	3,127	7,918	
5.	Weightlifting	3,016	-	3,016	
6.	Wrestling	2,160	-	2,160	
7.	Squash	1,856	1,281	3,137	
8.	Table Tennis	3,334	1,893	5,267	Trials initiated, Provincial and National Leagues to be initiated
9.	Handball	2,233	2,067	4,300	Trials, Provincial & National Leagues to be initiated
10.	Judo	1,673	965	4,300	
11.	Cricket	23,892	2,522	26,414	Online Registration is Open
12.	Boxing	709	101	810	Online Registration is Open
	Total	**76,879**	**24,021**	**100,900**	

The prominent activities of the project are as follows:

Football, Hockey and Volleyball Talent Hunt Activities

The National Leagues of Football, Hockey and Volleyball were successfully concluded in Lahore. The grand opening ceremony of these leagues was held at Football Stadium, Punjab Sports Board, Lahore. Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, was chief guest of the opening ceremony. Her presence highlighted the government's commitment to promoting sports and nurturing young talent. Former member of the provincial assembly, Mr. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, and other notable figures also attended the event, lending their support to the athletes.



Over 1,000 talented players from various regions of Pakistan participated in these leagues, demonstrating their skills and passion for their respective sports. The leagues provided a platform for young athletes to showcase their abilities, learn from experienced players, and compete at a national level.

Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja administered an oath to the participating athletes, inspiring them to strive for excellence and play fair. The event was marked by intense matches, thrilling moments, and a strong sense of sportsmanship.

These National Leagues have not only contributed to the development of sports in Pakistan but have also ignited a wave of enthusiasm among the youth. By providing opportunities for young athletes to compete at a high level, these leagues are helping shape a brighter future for Pakistani sports. Earlier, the trials of Football, Hockey and Volleyball were initiated across the country. The players were selected purely on merit and were trained in training camps to represent their provinces during provincial leagues.



Badminton and Squash Talent Hunts Culminate in Successful National Leagues

A rigorous talent hunt process, involving over 60 aspiring players aged 15-25 from across Pakistan, concluded successfully. These talented athletes were selected through intense trials held at 25 locations nationwide and subsequent provincial leagues.



The Badminton National League was held in Karachi, while the Squash National League took place in Islamabad. Both events showcased the exceptional skills and dedication of the young players.

Prof. Dr. Nassar Ikram, Vice Chancellor of Iqra University, expressed gratitude to HEC for its continued support of university sports and its role in elevating sports beyond academic institutions.



Air Marshal Zulfiqar Ahmed Qureshi, Deputy Chief of Air Staff (Training), graced the opening ceremony of Squash National League as Chief Guest. Renowned squash players Qamar Zaman and Sadia Gul, along with Dr. Jamil Ahmad, Member (IT) HEC, and Air Marshal Javaid Ahmed (Retd.), Vice Chancellor of Air University, also attended the event.

The closing ceremony of Squash National League was held at Air University Islamabad with Air Marshal Javaid Ahmed (Retd.) serving as Chief Guest.



The trials for Table Tennis, Handball, and Judo were commenced simultaneously to attract and engage interested players.

Three-Match Series between PMYP-HEC Hockey Team and Dutch Hockey Club

The Dutch Hockey Club Bully Ozendaal visited Pakistan to play a three-match series with PMYP-HEC Hockey team. The visit marked the first time in 21 years that a European hockey club has come to Pakistan.







The three-match series between the PMYP-HEC Hockey Team and the Dutch Hockey Club concluded with a thrilling victory for the Dutch team at the Naseer Bunda Hockey Stadium in Islamabad.

This exciting series attracted a diverse audience, including diplomats, sports enthusiasts, Olympians, university students from Islamabad and Rawalpindi, and media personnel. Notable attendees included the Ambassador of The Netherlands to Pakistan, Mrs. Henny de Vries, the Australian High Commissioner, Mr. Neil Hawkins, and several other dignitaries from countries such as Romania, Kyrgyzstan, Brunei Darussalam, and Morocco.

The series was part of Talent Hunt Youth Sports League initiative of HEC, aimed at identifying and nurturing young talent in various sports, including hockey. The initiative conducted trials across 25 regions in Pakistan, involving 10,816 boys and girls aged 15-25. Out of these, 900 promising players were selected, forming 50 teams that participated in training camps and provincial leagues. From these leagues, 72 top-performing players were shortlisted, with 40 outstanding players selected for further training. Afterwards, 18 players were chosen to represent the PMYP-HEC Hockey Team in this series against the Dutch Hockey Club, providing them with valuable exposure.
This series not only highlighted the growth of hockey in Pakistan but also contributed to the development of young players who will continue to shape the future of the sport in the country.

Establishment of Sports Academies and High-Performance Resource Centre

The project, Establishment of Sports Academies and High-Performance Resource Centre, is successfully being executed where sports infrastructure (playing facilities) and resource centres are being constructed in 12 HEIs/universities. The facilities will provide an excellent opportunity for training, mentoring, and learning for youngsters from all walks of life and backgrounds.

The details of the under constructed Sports Academies and Resource Centres is as under:

Sr. No.	Universities	Sports Academies
1	Karakoram International University, Gilgit	Skii & Sports Tourism Centre
2	NED University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi	High-Performance Lab & Research Centre
3	Benazir Bhutto Shaheed University, Lyari	Boxing
4	Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam	Judo
5	University of the Punjab, Lahore	Weightlifting
6	University of Peshawar	Volleyball
7	University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences, Lahore	Wrestling
8	Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences, Quetta	Athletics
9	University of Agriculture Faisalabad	Handball
10	Bahaudin Zakariya University, Multan	Hockey
11	Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan	Squash
12	University of Karachi	Football

Biomechanics Lab and High-Performance Centre



The Biomechanics Lab and High-Performance Centre at NED University of Engineering & Technology, Karachi is nearing completion and will play a key role in advancing sports science and enhancing athlete performance. The Lab will enable cutting-edge research in human movement, helping to optimize performance, prevent injuries, and develop innovative training methods and techniques. Complementing this, the High-Performance Centre will provide specialised treatments and recovery programmes for athletes, ensuring their swift return to peak condition.

These facilities will also offer valuable hands-on experience for undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students in biomechanics, sports sciences, and rehabilitation sciences, preparing them for careers in the growing sports and healthcare sectors.

Beyond sports, the centre will contribute to healthcare research, focusing on musculo-skeletal disorders, prosthetics, and ergonomics. It will also serve as a resource for the community, offering preventive healthcare and rehabilitation services.

Handball Academy & Resource Centre



The university's strategic location will harness local talent in Handball and promote sports excellence and community development. The academy will provide structured training to help young athletes from Faisalabad and surrounding areas reach their full potential, with opportunities for national and international recognition.
By integrating with academic programmes of the university, the academy will offer students hands-on experience in sports management, coaching, and physical education. Additionally, the resource centre will serve as a community hub, promoting health, fitness, and sportsmanship, while contributing to the socio-economic development of the region.

Squash Academy & Resource Centre

The Squash Academy & Resource Centre at Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan is at an advanced stage of establishment and aims to nurture the region's rich legacy of producing top-tier squash players. The academy will provide structured training and resources to help local athletes excel at national and international levels.
By creating this academy, the university would position itself as a leader in sports education and development, aligning with the university's commitment to holistic student growth and community engagement. Mardan's central location makes the academy an accessible hub for aspiring squash players from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, encouraging widespread participation and contributing to the revival and growth of squash in the region.

Success Stories of Sports & Co-curricular Activities Division



- Ms. Maliha and Ms. Manisha, exceptional student athletes and twin sisters, were invited as distinguished speakers at the National Convention: Youth - Pivot of National Integration. The event, which gathered young leaders from across the country, focused on empower-

ing the youth to play an active role in national development and integration.
Both sisters, who represent HEC in multiple martial arts disciplines, have excelled in Taekwondo, Karate, and Wushu. Their outstanding performances in these sports have earned them national recognition. They were selected to represent Pakistan in the Taekwondo team, a significant achievement that showcases their dedication, skill, and commitment to their sport.
At the convention, the sisters shared their inspiring journey, emphasizing the importance of discipline, hard work, and perseverance in achieving success both in sports and academics. Their story resonated with the youth in attendance, motivating them to pursue excellence in every aspect of life.

- Mr. Sharif Tahir, a university-athlete, represented HEC in 34th National Games, Quetta 2023 and was awarded with Presidential Pride of Performance on winning a Silver medal in commonwealth games. He was also awarded with Youth Excellence Award by Prime Minister of Pakistan on International Youth Day 2024. This award acknowledged his role as a youth ambassador for excellence, inspiring countless young people across the country to pursue their dreams and strive for success in both sports and life. His achievements serve as a beacon of hope for aspiring athletes, demonstrating that with dedication and hard work, the youth of Pakistan can achieve greatness on the world stage.

- Mr. Sufyan Khan, former HEC athlete and a student of Superior University, Lahore make Pakistan proud while representing Pakistan during Azlan Shah Hockey Cup 2024.

- Twelve female Cricketers, former university players, and nurtured by HEC through Cricket Intervarsity Championships represented Pakistani squad in the ACC Women's T20 Asia Cup in Dambulla, Sri Lanka from July 19-28, 2024.

HEC Athelete Ms. Faiqa Riaz paved her way to Paris Olympics through a wild card entry.



- Mr. Ubaid Shah, HEC-Athlete and University of Central Punjab, Lahore student represented Pakistan in the Asian Table Tennis Championship in Kazakhstan, 2024. He clinched a gold medal in Pakistan Table Tennis Masters Cup 2024. He has been the winner of All Pakistan Intervarsity Championship by representing in the year 2023. Representing HEC, Ubaid Shah won two bronze medals, and a silver medal in the National Games, Quetta 2023. He also represented Pakistan in the Asian Table Tennis Championship in Korea in the same year.



- Mr. Muhammad Huraira, represented HEC in Grade-I Cricket team and is selected to be in National Cricket Team. Likewise, Mr. Saad Khan and Mr. Saad Baig represented HEC are in Pakistan A team.

Higher Education Commission
Sector H-9, East Service Road
Islamabad, Pakistan

www.hec.gov.pk

HECPakistan2002 | hecpkofficial | HEC-Pakistan | HECPakistan2002 | hec_pk | HEC Pakistan