**Minutes: Media and Information Literacy Policy Advocacy Meeting with IFAP National Committee**

**Date:** 12 February 2020

**Time:** 10.30 – 12.30 hrs.

**Venue:** 4th Floor, Khyber Meeting Room, Serena Business Complex, Islamabad

In attendance:

1. Dr. Akram Sheikh, Chair, Information for All Programme (IFAP) National Committee,
2. Mr. Ricardo De Guimarães Pinto, Programme Specialist UNESCO,
3. Mr. Saifullah Azeem, Principal System Analyst, PASTIC,
4. Mr. Syed Paras Ali, Technology Times,
5. Ms. Hina Balloch, Technology Times,
6. Dr. Maryum Ibrar Shinwari, Senior Scientific Information Officer PASTIC,
7. Mr. Waqas Naeem, Programme Manager, Media Matters for Democracy,
8. Ms. Patricia McPhillips, Representative UNESCO Islamabad,
9. Ms. Farhana Saleem, Sr. Publications & Communication Officer, COMSATS Secretariat,
10. Mr. Saleem Akhtar Rao, General Manager Marketing, Pakistan Television Corporation, Islamabad
11. Ms. Maliha Shah, National Project Officer, UNESCO
12. Dr. Saima Tanveer, Addl. Director PASTIC,
13. Mr. Syed Ghayour Hussain, Director General, National Library of Pakistan
14. Ms. Syeda Addila Rubbab Kazmi, Deputy Director, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
15. Hamza Khan, Project Officer UNESCO

**Agenda:**

*(Please find below)*

Proceedings:

*Welcome by Chair and Co-Chair*

*Round of introductions*

*Discussion on MIL initiatives at country level*

Mr. Ricardo De Guimarães Pinto chaired the meeting, and began the conversation by introducing himself, and welcoming guests to the meeting. He then gave the floor to Dr. Akram Sheikh who co-chaired the meeting. Dr. Sheikh is the National Committee Chair of IFAP in Pakistan, currently working as Director General PASTIC at Quaid E Azam University Islamabad. Dr. Sheikh briefed the participants about his role as national committee chair and thanked UNESCO for facilitating the meeting of IFAP national committee.

After the introduction by Dr. Sheikh, the participants were requested to briefly introduce themselves and their roles as members of IFAP national committee.

During introductions, Mr. Syed Paras Ali shed light on the role of Technology Times as a magazine in promoting science education in the country. While elaborating on the need to promote science he highlighted the role of media organizations. He pointed towards lack of motivation ( financially and ratings wise) of media organizations to designate science beat reporters. He also explained that Technology Times has developed a course outline on science education and requested UNESCO for feedback on the outline.

Ms. Farhana Saleem pointed out the role of COMSATS Secretariat in Pakistan. Ms. Farhana works at COMSATS HQ. She further explained that people often assume COMSATS to be only a university in Pakistan. It is also a high level commission formulated at the government level promoting science and technology in developing countries. During the discussion she shared that they have a programme – “science diplomacy” through which they engage different countries on science.

Ms. Farhana and Mr. Paras Ali discussed the challenges faced by them in promoting science education in the country. While discussing MIL initiatives they pointed out the need for using it for “Science Communication” as well. Ms. Farhana noted that there are hardly any science communicators available in country. They agreed on the need to promote science among children at an early age. Mr. Paras noted that media shows on science related topics have slowly decreased. This has further created a disinterest among the young children about science. Nearly all participants unanimously agreed that children should be exposed to science at an earlier age to inspire them in pursuing science subjects. The lack of supply and demand of media reporting on science was discussed. The group suggested that MIL concepts may also be used to promote science in the country.

Mr. Ricardo agreed upon the important connection of MIL with Science. He mentioned the crucial role science and technology plays in gaining MIL skills. He pointed out that MIL is a very broad subject and should be approached through all angles. Due to highly futuristic concepts, MIL has a lot of potential to be developed further. It also has the scope to generate funds and seek collaboration with partners. He also introduced information preservation as another important aspect that can be looked in to at Pakistan level. However, he explained that it is up to the national committee to see which and how MIL initiatives work better in Pakistan.

Syed Ghayour Hussain, Director General, National Library of Pakistan welcomed Ms. Patricia McPhillips to Pakistan and invited her to visit National Library of Pakistan. He stated that National Library of Pakistan will be pleased to host activities/ events for MIL. Mr. Hussain had already agreed to host IFAP consultations at national library.

Mr. Saleem Akhtar Rao, GM Marketing PTV, also welcomed Patricia Mc Phillips to Pakistan and invited her to visit PTV. He explained that PTV has an out reach of more than 95% in the country. It is the only government TV channel that is seen across the country. He suggested that PTV’s channel/s can be utilized to promote MIL in the country. While providing inputs he further suggested that special tailored programmes on MIL can be developed that can be aired on PTV for advocacy. He also expressed full support of his organization to celebrate Global MIL week in collaboration with PTV. He also suggested that international days such as International day on literacy can also be celebrated in collaboration with PTV.

Ms. Addila Rubbab, from Ministry of Information also shared that UNESCO’s role in capacity building of media for quality content and ethical reporting would be welcome. She also expressed government support for awareness raising activities at public institutions if needed.

Mr. Waqas Naeem from Media Matters for democracy emphasized that IFAP committee could gain from streamlining efforts by having clear action points for follow up. He also called for innovative ways for promoting information access and science communication, in vogue with latest developments.

Dr. Akram Sheikh pointed out the important role of UNESCO in developing Pakistan’s capacity on various issues. He explained that Pakistan Scientific and Technological Information Centre (PASTIC) was supported by UNESCO in 1959. He recapped IFAP committee initiatives in the country. Dr. Sheikh noted that IFAP committee hosted a two day conference on MIL and PVE in

2019 and workshop on tools for MIL was held at PASTIC last year along with the National Committee Meeting ( 22nd October 2019) in Islamabad.

Mr. Ricardo commended the active role of IFAP National Committee in Pakistan and the outcomes achieved by IFAP committee in a brief period of time.

**Action points/questions for later:**

* The committee focal persons agreed to meet on quarterly basis for meeting on IFAP program in Pakistan
* The committee agreed to call this meeting (12th February 2020) as first meeting of IFAP in 2020 (Quarter-1)
* PASTIC to provide technical support to development of website for IFAP national committee
  + A meeting to be called to finalize content for website for IFAP national committee
  + In future the committee to look into facilitating initiatives on the IFAP priority areas conducted by non-members , and consider the same to be featured on the website
* Mutually agreed content to be developed for visibility material such as brochure for IFAP programme in Pakistan
* There is a need to activate focal persons of sub-committees of IFAP national committee
  + Dr. Akram Sheikh to activate sub-committee member of IFAP committee and ask them to share their proposals to work on MIL in Pakistan
* Dr. Akram Sheikh to write introductory letters to relevant institutes asking them about priorities and strategies to support IFAP programme in Pakistan
* Group e-mail to be formed
* Information preservation will also be looked in to in collaboration with the national library
* The committee members unanimously agreed to work together on IFAP priority areas by leveraging existing resources and knowledge sharing

**Media and Information Literacy Policy Advocacy Meeting with IFAP Committee Pakistan**

**February 12, 2020**

**10:30 am – 12:30 pm**

**4th Floor, Khyber Meeting Room, Serena Business Complex, G-5**

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| 10:00 – 10:30 | Registration |  |
| 10:30 – 10:35 | Welcome remarks | Dr. Akram Sheikh (IFAP Committee Chair Pakistan) |
| 10:35 – 10:40 | Opening remarks | Ricardo De Guimarães Pinto (Program specialist and IFAP) |
| 10:40 – 10:45 | Round of introductions | Focal persons (IFAP committee) |
| 10:45 – 11:00 | Recap: IFAP committee activities   * UNESCO IFAP : MIL for PVE conference Sept, 2019 * IFAP MIL training for journalists – PASTIC | Dr. Akram Sheikh |
| 11:00 – 11:15 | IFAP priority areas and objectives of the meeting :   * Global priority areas: In particular **‘Information literacy’** * Takeaways from Intl Conference on Media and Conflict 2020 on **digital/MIL literacy** | Ricardo De Guimarães Pinto |
| 11:15 – 12:15 | How can IFAP committee members advocate, support incorporation of Media and Information literacy as a priority in their institutional capacity? | Round table discussion |
| 12:15 – 12:30 | Concluding remarks | Dr. Akram Sheikh / Ricardo De Guimarães Pinto |