



National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council

NAEAC: Communication Strategy

A. Introduction

The NAEAC Communication Strategy is designed to establish a continuous flow of relevant information to NAEAC stakeholders. It is intended to be a mechanism of outreach, feedback, public relations and resource mobilization. It would also help improve awareness and transparency of information relating to the quality of agriculture degree programs being offered in Pakistan. Its primary objective is to disseminate the NAEAC mandate, objectives, activities, and results of the quality assurance programs aimed at improving the quality of agriculture degree programs being offered by different education institutions in Pakistan.

B. Background

2. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) attaches high importance to quality assurance and capacity enhancement of degree awarding institutions. For this purpose it has established a number of Accreditation Councils with the mandate to undertake accreditation of all degree programs offered in the country. The NAEAC is one of these Councils dedicated exclusively for accreditation of agriculture degree programs based on standards, procedures and criteria set by HEC. The accreditation of the degree programs is based on external evaluation of the quality of faculty, curriculum, teaching and learning methods as well as the adequacy of physical infrastructure of the university/college concerned. All agriculture degree awarding institutions in Pakistan are required to get their degree programs accredited by NAEAC. As of December 2010, NAEAC has accredited 38 degree programs out of 170 being offered by 17 agriculture education institutions country-wide. At present these data and information are shared with stakeholders in the form of following reports and outreach sources. Important among these include: Awareness Seminars at the Universities and Colleges, Annual Reports of NAEAC, Quarterly Progress Reports, NAEAC Council Meetings, On-Site Visits, Press Releases, and Parent Alerts.

C. Objectives

1. The main objectives of the NAEAC's Communication Strategy are to: (i) disseminate information about its activities and accreditation processes and programs; (ii) issue alerts for prospective students and their parents on the accreditation status of various agriculture education institutions and the degrees programs they offer; (iii) collect, compile, and disseminate general information and data on agriculture education in Pakistan; (iv) reach out all stakeholders, including students and their parents, faculty, HEC management and QAA,

heads of agriculture education institutions, government and international agencies concerned, agro–industry, employers of agriculture graduates in the public and private sectors, media, educators, bankers, farmers, consumers, etc. on accreditation and quality enhancement programs of HEC/NAEAC; and (iv) to create awareness for continuing need for internal and external monitoring of education quality and learning innovations in agriculture education institutions.

D. Strategy

Dissemination of information is of paramount importance in order to improve awareness amongst the stakeholders and to ensure transparency of information and public interests. This requires continuous propagation of the institutions concerned and their aims, objectives, activities, and results of the programs and projects, they handle. The Strategy is designed to establish a continuous flow of all relevant information to stakeholders and outreach sources as well as mechanism for feedback, public relations and resource mobilization. The main features of the strategy include, but not limited to the followings:

- i. Dissemination of real time data and information on agriculture education in Pakistan with all stakeholders and outreach sources through electronic and print media as well as personal visits and interviews.
- ii. Exchange of information database on NAEAC accreditation activities of agriculture education institutions within HEC, QAA, Accreditation Councils, and outside to public and private agencies concerned at the national and international levels.
- iii. Networking with agriculture accreditation councils at international levels and exchanging experiences on accreditation exercise, quality assurance, learning/teaching innovations, and international best practices on methodology.
- iv. Maximizing the use of electronic media as a channel of communication given its cost effectiveness.
- v. Establishing links with regional and international Quality Assurance and Accreditation agencies relevant to Agriculture with the objective to mobilize external assistance in the form of grants and technical assistance.
- vi. Participation in national, regional and international conferences relating to quality assurance and accreditation
- vii. Regular and timely production of various progress reports and updating of NAEAC website to provide real time information

D. Target Audience

The target audiences of NAEAC are all stakeholders and outreach sources, including the following:

- i. Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), HEC i.e. (MD QAA & DD QAA),
- ii. Council Members of NAEAC,
- iii. Accreditation Councils,
- iv. Agriculture Education Institutions,
- v. Quality Enhancement Cells (QEC's) in Agriculture Institutions,
- vi. Parents and Students,
- vii. Alumni Associations,
- viii. Employers of Agriculture Graduates
- xi. National, Regional and International Agencies Concerned

E. Key Messages

The key messages to be communicated will relate to and focus on the image building and qualitative improvement of education degree programs and capacity building of institutions to bring them at par with internationally accepted standards.

- i. Improving quality of education and capacity building,
- ii. Ranking of the agriculture degree programs by discipline and universities concerned.
- iii. Employability of agriculture graduates and their contributions to national development and well-being.
- iv. Initiatives aimed at quality enhancement, capacity building, and teaching/learning innovations.
- v. Linking the Accreditation Councils (ACs) through networking of ACs IT Specialists working group
- vi. Resource mobilization for improving the quality of agriculture education in Pakistan particularly from major employers like Agro-Industries, etc.

F. Communication Mix

The following medium would be adopted for transfer of and dissemination of information:

- i. Electronic and Print Media
- ii. Multimedia, Radio, Television, Online, etc.
- iii. E-News Letters, Brochures
- iv. Evaluation Reports of the Accreditation Inspection Committees
- v. Conferences and Meetings
- vi. Telecommunication, etc.

G. Budget Estimates

In order to implement the proposed Communication Strategy, additional funds of Rs. 0.5 million will be based on the expanded scope of various ongoing and new activities as given below:

Proposed Activities	Cost Estimates (Rs)
i. Electronic and Print Media (Website, E-mail, Annual Report, Parents Alert, different types of Manuals/forms, etc.)	150,000
ii. Multimedia, Radio, Television, Online (On-site Visits, seminars/workshops)	45,000
iii. E-News-letters, Brochures (News/Views, brochures, manuals, handbooks, etc)	50,000
iv. Mail, Postage, Courier Services (distribution of reports material, other material to stakeholders)	25,000
v. Conferences and Meetings: Arranged conferences and meetings as per its byelaws.	200,000
vi. Telecommunication: Teleconference purpose, telephone/fax, etc	30,000
Total	500,000