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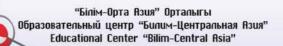
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Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura

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منظمة الأمم المتحدة للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、科学及文化组织



Newsletter

Central Asia Conference

«Situation Analysis of Higher Education and the Use of ICT in the Central Asian Countries»



Information on the project

Higher education in the Central Asia countries, as well as in many other parts of the world, has undergone a number of changes, including increase of enrollment rate, prompt growth of knowledge, information and communication technologies, and also globalization and economic re-structuring, financial difficulties. The above resulted in various higher education reforms in the region.

Recent changes and higher education reforms have shown that the Central Asia countries have to cooperate closely in order to achieve level which will be able to produce the highly qualified human resources required for global sustainable development and competitiveness.

Thus, an insistent need to conduct a situation analysis of higher education in Central Asia has appeared. The situation analysis has been carried out in four Central Asia countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan through researchers who were selected and introduced to UNESCO's National Committees. Work was carried out in close cooperation with the Ministries of Education of the above countries. Targets were identified largely based on a document analysis method, by using the Internet sources and archives and also by surveying representatives of the Higher Educational Institutions (HEI) administration.

On September 29-30, 2006, the UNESCO - Bangkok, UNESCO - Almaty and UNESCO - Tashkent together with the Education Policy Analysis Center (the «BILIM-CENTRAL ASIA", the Organization Department), hold the Conference «Situation Analysis of Higher Education and the Use of ICT in the Central Asian Countries» in Almaty, where preliminary reports of experts from Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan were presented.

The aims of the Conference were the following:

- Presentation and discussion of intermediate findings of the higher education analysis in the Central Asia countries;
- Identification of the general trends in higher education in the Central Asia countries, including the ICTs;
- Development of recommendations on how to improve higher education based on partnership and cooperation;
- Development of recommendations on how to improve the national reports

The findings in connection with the higher education analysis carried out by researchers from the Central Asia countries were presented at the Conference. The key aspects of higher education reform in these countries, with special point on information and communication technologies in Higher Education have been discussed.

When opening the Conference, **Ms. Tarja Virtanen**, **Head of the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office**, said, that policy-makers concerned with higher education and government officials should be well informed about its development and its trends in other countries. This information will make them more knowledgeable about higher education in their countries. That is, they can assess at what stage it appears to be now, what direction should be taken, its strengths and weaknesses, which areas will need more attention in the future, and how and in which areas to cooperate in order to reach synergy at the regional level.

Representatives of the Ministries of Education, Information Centers, and also researchers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan took part in the Conference as well as representatives of HEIs, Associations and other agencies operating in the field of higher education and ICTs.

Higher Education in Central Asia: Analytical Frameworks

Ms. Molly Lee, Specialist in Higher Education of Regional Office UNESCO-Bangkok presented guidelines which were offered to researchers to be followed in conducting situation analyses on higher education in the Central Asia countries.

The situation analysis of higher education in the Central Asia countries included the following:

- Higher education reforms, a general analysis of higher education reform include new legislation, financing higher education, merging of higher education institutions and ministries, establishment of new ministries and quality assurance agencies, university admission policies, length of academic programs, recruitment of foreign staff and students, methods of instruction, etc.
- Access to higher education, expansion of higher education, enrollment rates, total number of higher education institutions (HEIs) and students, gender balance, proportion of students in public and private sectors, distribution/geographical location of HEIs, etc.
- Diversification of higher education, different types of HEIs and their missions including polytechnics, technical institutions, community colleges, open and distance learning institutions, virtual universities, crossborder/transnational education, etc.
- Use of ICT in Higher Education Institutions elearning, blended learning, use of ICT in distance learning, use of information management systems in universities, etc.
- Changes in university governance and management -including the corporatisation of public universities, autonomous universities, entrepreneurial universities, etc. What are the changes, why are these changes made, and how do these changes affect the autonomy and accountability of the universities?

- Restructuring of faculties and academic programs

 credit system, merger of faculties or establishment
 new faculties (rationale behind), interdisciplinary
 and multi-disciplinary approach, broad based liberal education, etc.
- Developing research capacities availability and allocation of research funds, types of research funds, research priorities, university and industry partnership, incentives for research initiatives, etc.
- Changing academic profession how do the changes in the higher education systems affect the working conditions of academics, and what are some of the new roles that are expected of them.
- Roles and functions of private higher education to meet excess demand, cultural (religious) distinctiveness, academic or socio-economic advantage. Who are the key players? Any kind of public-private partnerships? Explore on how and why private higher education expand, including the emergence of cross-border education and regulation of private higher education by the government.
- Internationalization of higher education academic mobility in terms of staff, students, programs and institutions. Different types of international exchange and cross-border education. The implication of GATS on higher education. Recognition of academic and professional qualifications.
- Accreditation and quality assurance accreditation/ quality assurance agencies, their roles and functions, and the processes involved etc.
- Challenges and future development what are the key issues and challenges faced by each higher education system and what are the future development and trends in each country?



Situational Analysis of Higher Education: Country Cases

Kazakhstan

Researchers who conducted situational analyses across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, have presented the progress reports prepared according to the structure and the guidelines developed by the UNESCO-Bangkok office.

Zauresh Issayeva, Head, the Ethnic Pedagogic Faculty, Professor of the Kazakh National University named after Al-Farabi, outlined, that the higher education reforms in Kazakhstan resulted in positive trends, including the following:

- Democratization of higher education and decentralization of management;
- Diversification of the HEIs network and their structure;
- Development of a new regulatory framework;
- Introduction of new National Higher Education standards;
- Overall increase in students number, including students of the private sector

The following institutional reorganizations took place:

- Optimization and rationalization of the Higher Education Institution network. As a result, multidisciplined universities have been established via integration of sectoral and regional HEIs and reorganization of teachers and technical institutes to universities;
- Integration of Science and Education, resulted in creation of Scientific Research Institutes within universities:
- Creating conditions for the private higher education development: in 1994 there were only 32 nongovernmental HEIs in Kazakhstan, while in 2004 their number increased up to 134;
- Change of higher education framework. In compliance with Law "On Education", in 1999 in order to unify the higher education framework and harmonize it with the international standards, the following higher education structure has been stipulated by in legislation:

- Basic Higher Education Level (Bachelor degree), a four-year-course, a Graduate level;
- Higher Special Education Level, no less than a fouryear-course, qualified as a «Specialist of Higher Vocational Education Level»;
- Higher Scientific and Pedagogic Education Level (Magistracy), a two-year course based on the Basic Higher Education Level, and a one-year course based on the Higher Special Education Level, a "Master" Degree.

Nevertheless, still there are problems to be solved.

- There is still a gap between current labor market demands and the list of occupations; it takes too much time to make a decision to close noncompetitive professions, although training of specialists not meeting the needs of both economy and labor market continues, thus giving rise to joblessness;
- The number of unemployed young specialists and also those employed but not in compliance with the acquired profession is still high. At most, higher education institutions are not responsible for employment of their graduates, specifically "for a fee" graduates. According to various experts, only 30-40% of graduates can find job in compliance with their acquainted profession. Lots of students, not yet having completed their first education, plan to transfer to another profession. Due to low salaries in public health, science, education, many graduates find occupations other than an related one, in companies with high earnings or jobs not required higher education level (drivers, service workers, etc.);
- As yet, higher education has not been oriented to the future, that is to train specialists in view of rapid technological growth and demands for multifunctional specialists who are ready to change their professions.

Situational Analysis of Higher Education: Country Cases

Kyrgyzstan

As Eugeniya Boiko, Leading Specialist, Administration of Higher, Secondary Vocational and Postgraduate Education, the KR Ministry of Education, Science and Youth Policy said, higher education in the Kyrgyz Republic also faces problems which require efforts integrating world education and assurance of educational quality meeting the world standards. Higher education reform in Kyrgyzstan is essential to promote sustainable community development, economic growth and poverty reduction. It is obvious that the higher a professional education level of adult people will result in a higher standard of well-being, stability and economic potential of society. These two parameters are in direct correlation.

Priority objectives of higher education development are as follows:

- Maintaining accessibility to higher and secondary vocational education for different classes of the population;
- Optimizing a higher vocational education framework;
- Improving the quality of education;
- Continuing and extending the Bologna process' pilot implementation in higher education, and further integrating global education;
- Bringing into conformity the budget-based graduates with the labor market demands;
- Creating conditions for exporting education services;
- Introducing a mechanism of independent accreditation of HEIs and higher education curriculum;
- Improving adult training and retraining systems, developing additional vocational training systems.

For the purpose of accomplishing the above objectives the following has been planned:

- To continue consecutive application of Law on Education in view of monitoring the accessibility and quality of higher professional, secondary vocational and additional education;
- To develop new qualifying performances of occupations and positions based on employer requirements;
- To improve the regulatory framework of higher professional, secondary vocational and additional

education;

- To improve the quality and efficiency of higher professional, secondary vocational and additional education;
- To continue activity on improving forms of the teaching staff professional development;
- To implement the priority national policy of teachers postgraduate training and professional retraining on a regular basis;
- To promote research of the labor market and to coordinate education policy;
- To identify the list of national and regional HEIs to place public contracts for training specialists of critical occupations in social spheres and the national economy;
- To create a mechanism of education quality assurance;

The following is planned to be done in the midtermand long-term perspective:

- To integrate and classify HEIs according to their training goals;
- To develop a list and specific actions to support priority professions and the directions providing a break of social and economic development in the country,
- To reconsider the mechanism, program and criteria of evaluation of the licensing and state attestation procedures.
- To create a national system of education quality assessment;
- To introduce the HEI and curriculum of independent accreditation;
- To carry out the HEI surveys to identify the graduate employment rate;
- To strive to include a bachelor status, to be recognized as a specialist having the right to be employed according to the acquired profession into the Labor Code of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- To continue the Bologna process pilot;
- To strengthen requirements to advance training of teaching staff.

Situational Analysis of Higher Education: Country Cases

Tajikistan

Faizullo Sharipov, Vice-president, Academy of Education, Professor, mentioned that despite of social and economic transitional problems existing in the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic, during the period of its independence, could continue to extend access to higher education. Total number of HEIs in the country has increased from 13 in 1991 up to 33 in 2002, and the number of students from 69,300 to 96,000 students respectively.

Higher education accessibility is also provided through creation of HEI network with the Russian Federation, other CIS and foreign countries, including the Russian - Tajik (Slavic) University (total number of students - 3245), the Tajik Open University (1009 students.), the Modern Humanitarian University (547 students), Open Institute named after Ismoili Somoni (358 students.), Central Asia Branch (355 students) and the International Humanitarian University (304 students). Activity of the above HEIs subject to a careful review in view of their conformity to the regulatory and the agreements provisions. That is, the accessibility to higher education has been accompanied by suitable quality of the graduates. On the whole, this objective has been assigned to all education institutions of Tajikistan,

subject to analysis of the special commission. The commission has developed recommendations for each Institution on its status, that is, its accreditation. In the RT regions there are due educational institutions providing access for an applicant. The gender balance of male and female ratio in comparison with 1991 tends to the reduction of girls. Their share in the total number of students has decreased almost by 10% to 25% in 2002.

All over the world education is a priority. Tajikistan considers education of vital importance. Some official laws, doctrines, international conferences and other actions have proved the above true. Revision of the curriculum and disciplines taught at a comprehensive level, and their connection with the prospective study at a HEI for those qualified is a priority. Based on the final documents, the RT Ministry of Education reviews and introduces modern credit-based education modes. All higher education curriculum-related issues have been aimed at achievement of a strategic goal - to prepare a competitive specialist capable of making an effective contribution to the formation of legal, prosperous and developed countries.



Situational Analysis of Higher Education: Country Cases

Uzbekistan

Kodirzhon Rusiev, Doctor of Engineering, Head, Department of Scientific and Pedagogical Personnel, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Vocational Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, told about the most important innovations which took place in higher education of the country:

- Priority of University education.
- Development and introduction of new education standards and curriculum – baccalaureate - 140, magistracy - 360.
- Improvement of education quality and student protection:
 - Final written examinations and student knowledge rating system have been introduced,
 - Based on new textbooks and Internet information, courses of lecture have been developed by each teacher, duplicated and reserved at the HEI libraries
 - Exchange of courses of lecture between universities was organized: 12 thousand lectures exist,
 - Competition of courses of lecture has been carried out annually (3200 participants in 2003),
 - The Innovation Fund has been created (10 thousand units),
 - Regular certification of teachers and rating based on attestation of educational institutions have been performed,
 - Information portal of the Ministry of Higher Education (http://ails.nuu.uz) has been created (2500 units), etc.

- Mechanisms of decentralization and differentiation of powers in the department of education and HEIs have been introduced.
- Special curriculum and courses: «Civil Society Principles», «Tolerant Consciousness and Conduct», «Principles of Legal Culture», «Principles of Safety Vital Activity», etc. were introduced.
- Regulatory collections (about 100 printed sheets) were published.
- Center of Legal Culture within the Law Institute was created with under the auspices of the US Bar Association
- International Westminster University was organized.
- Mechanisms of multichannel financing, education credit systems were introduced.
- Bodies of public- and self-government of education and education institutions: Association of Rectors of Uzbekistan, Boards of Guardians were created.
- Public Center «Civil Society and Tolerant Conduct» was opened.
- Regular advanced training of teachers and professional training abroad, 1998-2003, more than 4000 and 5000 persons respectively.
- Cooperation Agreements with 15 countries were signed, including at the ministry level, more than 100, with HEI, about 500.
- About 200 foreign specialists were invited in 2003. investments in the amount of about 6 million US dollars were attracted in 2003.

General Issues

In addition, the participants discussed general issues in connection with quality assurance of higher education in Central Asia.

They include the following:

- Insufficient financing
- Higher education and its conformity to the economic development demands, education mission in a new world
- Quality of teaching staff system of training and advanced training, exchange programs
- The education content transition from a knowledge-centrist to a competency based approach.

Central Asia Cooperation in Higher Education

Creation of the Central Asia Association of Universities (CAAU) is an example of cooperation in higher education in Central Asia. *Valentin Yantsen, Vice-president, the Central Asia Association of Universities* told the CAAU creation history, its aims and objectives.

The CAAU's Aims and Objectives

- Promotion of the integration of the Central Asia education in international education space:
- Development of a general policy in improving the quality of education:
- Certification and attestation of curriculum and courses, developed by members of Association;
- Promotion of the HEIs accreditation abroad;
- Exchange of teachers and students;
- Strengthening of institutional ties to public ends;
- Promotion of global, regional, national cooperation of HEI, and also with the governmental and private education-concerned agencies;
- Development and publication of joint curriculum and courses
- International publishing and advertising activity;
- Creation of a sharable database (creating the HEI homepage, carrying out teleconferences, exchange of information about new publications, current news, etc.)

Challenges and the CAAU Future Prospects:

- Financial provision of the Central Asia Association of Universities activity;
- Building of integrated scientific education space based on advanced methods and informational facilities, and telecommunications;

- Integrating efforts of members of the Association to realize continuous education principles and human rights to access education as much as possible in compliance with his/her creative, cultural and intellectual needs regardless of place of residence;
- Enhancing efficiency of training and retraining of the regional HEI scientific and pedagogical staff and efficiency of scientific research the open scientific educational space concept:
- Development of new distance learning modes and technologies making the best use of a trainingmethodical base for all members of the Association on behalf of trainees:
- Formation of information-education resources;
- Providing access to new education technologies, including information;
- Development and creation of the open education training-method software;
- Development, implementation and improvement of distance learning technologies and methods by regional education institutions;
- Copyright protection of distance learning and educationmethodical materials;
- The distance programs conformity to national education standards of the countries - participants;
- Training of specialists in distance learning mode.

It was mentioned, that at this stage the CAAU is more likely a resource for potential cooperation than a practical tool. Participants of the Conference offered an opinion that similar Associations have considerable opportunity for cross-intensification and cross-fertilization with ideas and resources and they can be a powerful means to promote reform.



Use of ICT in Higher Education: the Central Asia Countries Best Practice

Use of ICT in higher education was discussed during the second day of the Conference. Participants of each country presented cases on development of ICT in their countries and shared best practice.

Kazakhstan

For the higher education informatization concerns, the HEIs appeared to be well equipped with the last-generation computers, and the majority have Internet access. Many HEIs have computer centers, and also make efforts to develop and use automated education management systems and distance programs. Thus. educational computerization and informatization in the Republic of Kazakhstan can be characterized as a goaloriented process.

Along with these achievements, higher education informatization faces some problems. The state intraregional channels

available in the country are unable to meet the requirements of education informatization, assuming transmission of large volumes of information. The education informatization regulatory framework is weak. There is a deficit of electronic products in the Kazakh language and actually there is no training on informatics and information technologies in the Kazakh language. There is no software developed to form education portals, electronic libraries, or media libraries. Protection of education information resources is not provided and distance learning is in the embryonic

Use of ICT in HEIs of Kazakhstan

Olga Semenyuk, Director, the MBA and Distance Programs Department, University of International Business (Kazakhstan) shared experience on distance leaning introduction in the University of International Business.

She said that distance learning programs in Kazakhstan have been considered to be a mode of study with application of technologies (according to the RK National standard 34.016-2004 "Distance Learning Technical and Software Tools"). The distance learning portal: www.dl.uib.kz. There are both offline and online lessons (class hours + the knowledge control) available.

The online classes are given simultaneously in the cities of Astana, Aktobe, Kostanai, Shymkent, Ust-Kamenogorsk.

Saken Makhmutov, Director, Center of Computer Technologies, the Kazakh State Female Teacher's Institute presented Management Information System (MIS) which permits an increased rate of decisions grounding due to operative information gathering, transferring and processing; raising management efficiency, etc. The following software products were

developed:

- Automated Educational Process Testing System (AEPTS);
- Management Information System «Dean's Office / Office Registrar»;
- Management Information System «Training-Methodical Department»;
- Subsystem "HR Department" within the Automated Management System "Institute";
- Automated Workplace (AW) "Statistics";
- Automated Multimedia Elements of Education Credit System (ECS).

The above software products are partly introduced into the academic activity of some Kazakhstani HEIs: the Kazakh State Female Teacher's Institute, the Kazakh National Pedagogical University named after Abai, the Education Center "Bobek", the Kazakh Economic University named after T.Ryskulov, the West - Kazakhstan State Academy named after M.Ospanov, the West- Kazakhstan Agrarian and Technical University named after Zhangir khan, the Kazakh-Russian International University in Uralsk, etc.



The use of ICTs is one of the determinants in increasing the competitiveness of the National **Education System and the** extension of opportunities for its integration into the global education environment. With a view of informatization of all education levels in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Concept of Education Informatization, 2002-2004 was developed and approved based on which the State Education Informatization Program, 2002-2004 was elaborated. According to these and other regulatory documents some steps were taken aimed at achievement of midterm purposes.



Use of ICT in higher education: the Central Asia Countries Best Practice

Kyrgyzstan

Manas Zhekshebaev, Acting Chief, the Information Technologies Department, the Ministry of Education, Science and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic said that informatization is a critical problem of the Kyrgyzstan's higher education. Currently there is only 1 computer servicing 35 students, only 50% of all available computers have access to the Internet and LAN channel. 50% of HEIs possess the automated accounting systems, about 24% have special software on finance management, HR, document circulation. Only 4 HEIs out of 49 use complex management information systems. 22% have information-publishing systems, multimedia and electronic libraries and only 40% have their own websites. Generally, information about HEIs and requirements for undergraduate applicants are placed on these websites. Only 14,5% of students have access to the Internet (more than 1 hour per week).

Development of electronic courses and education using ICTs remains unchanged. The distance learning system, based on the Internet technologies has not been developed and actually traditional learning via correspondence by means of mail services is used. Thus, in comparison with the above, access of 30 Bishkek's HEIs to the "AKNET" scientific and education computer network through leased Internet lines looks like the achievement.

The quality of training of the ICT specialist as well as other specialists who apply ICTs in their work and also teachers of informatics and heads of various ICT centers represent a problem.

In this context, the KR Ministry of Education underlines the following priorities in the higher education information-communication technologies development which require investments:

- To continue to equip HEIs with computers in order to achieve the ratio of no more than 10 students per 1 computer.
- To provide access to the Internet for all HEIs of the country through separate lines or using ADSL technology, by 2008.
- To improve the training curriculum for ICT specialists and ICT teachers.
- To develop the distance learning technologies
- To develop electronic educational materials, create electronic libraries, ioin the HEI electronic information resources.
- To provide development of the "AKNET", the academic and education network in the region and based on it incorporate information resources of all the Kyrgyzstan HEIs.
- To create education WEB-portal «Kyrgyzstan Bilim Education» which would include all education information in Kyrgyzstan in three languages Kyrgyz, Russian and English. The WEB-portal should be a first step in building up an integrated information retrieval system which will provide receiving public data.
- To provide training of heads of regional, regional and city Education Administrations and educational institutions which will allow to use ICT in the education system management.



Use of ICT in Higher Education: the Central Asia Countries Best Practice

Tajikistan

For 33 HEIs of the Republic of Tajikistan as Faizullo Sharipov, Vice-President of Academy of Pedagogical Sciences said, that the main aspect of using information and communication technologies issue is academic computerization. This criterion has been defined as a key one in the documents on the HEI accreditation in the Republic of Tajikistan specifying the standard of providing HEIs with computers. According to this standard, each student should use a computer not less than 12-15 hours per academic year. Such standards enables the HEIs to achieve a required initial level, and subsequently, depending on financial possibilities and relations with various sponsors, international organizations, to establish computer centers and/or other information and communication structures to manage ICT.

The distance learning programs in the RT HEIs as of September 1, 2005 have not been licensed. except for the training centers which were organized within the RT HEIs' structures. The distance learning expansion in the foreseeable future in higher education of the Republic of Tajikistan requires thorough analysis from the point of view of availability of the material base and teachers who can apply the distant technologies in the academic process. It requires a special training center where teachers should improve their professional skills, and students should learn principles of using various sources and technologies to master their skills, and recognize their state of art within the integrated distant learning network.

Practice of the Tajik Technical University named after Osimi, the Tajik Agrarian University, the Technological University of Tajikistan, the Khudzha Branch of Technological University of Tajikistan, the Tajik State University of Commerce, the Russian - Tajik (Slavic) University and some other HEIs may be considered successful in using ICT in the HEIs academic activity. For example, at the Tajik Agrarian University examination results are collected. classified and processed in the same center where teachers and students can familiarize with each student's progress, and also with each teacher's performance. In the Khudzha Branch of Technological University of Tajikistan the whole academic process is based on automated programs where the integrated test center processes the results, allowing them to achieve an absolute transparency of examination results and to avoid exerting students knowledge rates by teachers and students. At the Taiik State University of Commerce, information technology is used in business games on banking principles and other economic disciplines.

The Technological University of Tajikistan, the Tajik Technical University and some other RT HEIs are a part of Association "TARENA" which provided students and teachers with maximum access to Internet when writing term papers and graduation works or carrying out researches.

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Use of ICT in Higher Education: the Central Asia Countries Best Practice

Uzbekistan

Within the period of realization of National Program on Personnel Training the number of computers in the HEIs has increased from 554 to 13900. While in 1999 there were 31 students per one computer, by the end of 2003 this number appeared to be 18. Actually all HEIs of the Republic have created a local network and have access to Internet. Some HEIs have access to the Republican Education Computer Network, which extension and modernization continue. The virtual together with traditional laboratory benches laboratory equipment are widely used in the HEIs' laboratories. In aid of efficient utilization of a scientific - laboratory base available in the Republic, branches of faculties and laboratories in the scientific laboratories and industry scientific research institutes within the Academy of Sciences have been organized.

The HEIs fundamental libraries are equipped with computers, polygraphs, facilities of information exchange and delivery. The "Irbis", automated system of fund formation of and information search has been introduced there. Modern libraries, together with

traditional holding, have electronic versions of books, textbooks, both self-designed and purchased abroad.

Mikhail Khegai, Chief Specialist, Office of Information-Communication Technologies Introduction in Education, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Vocational Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, draw attention of the participants to the information portal of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Vocational Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, www.edu.uz. He gave information about the Ministry's website structure, its content, information capacity.

After discussion of the state presentations on using ICTs in higher education, the participants handled the **most general problems**, common to the whole region, including the following:

- Information exchange language
- Regulatory framework
- Scientific exchange
- Choice of a software platform
- Choice of distance learning mode and type

General Recommendations

Recommendations on how to improve higher education in the Central Asia region based on partnership and cooperation were formulated by the end of the Conference:

- To create frameworks for joint meetings to share best experiences in the form of conferences, round tables, seminars
- To intensify efforts within the framework of the Central Asia Association of Universities
- To develop a corporate website to inform about higher education development
- To create a system of public quality assurance of education in the region, to be carried out by an independent agency

Newsletter

Central Asia Conference

«Situation Analysis of Higher Education and the Use of ICT in the Central Asian Countries»

UNESCO Cluster Office for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan & Uzbekistan 67, Tole bi str.,

050000, Almaty, Kazakhstan tel: +7(327) 2582643

fax: +7(327) 2794853 e-mail: almaty@unesco.org http://www.unesco.kz Education Policy Analysis Center of Educational Center "Bilim-Central Asia" 65 Abylai-Khan str., of.13 050004 Almaty, Kazakhstan tel. +7(327) 2597622 fax. +7(327) 2795955 e-mail: skalikova@bilim.kz