

COP WEBINAR 4 FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION – SUMMARY OF COUNTRY DISCUSSIONS

Making the student teacher practicum an effective learning experience

A strong consensus emerged that the practicum provides valuable **real classroom experience**, helping student teachers connect theory with practice. Most countries described a progression from observation to active teaching, supported by school mentors and university supervisors.

Organizational and Structural Problems

-  **KAZAKHSTAN:** Heavy workloads, non-teaching duties, monitoring difficulties, limited supervisor time.
-  **KYRGYZSTAN:** Short placements, inconsistent experiences across schools, insufficient teaching opportunities.
-  **TAJIKISTAN:** Short practicum duration, limited resources, inconsistent feedback.
-  **TURKMENISTAN:** Resource limitations and inconsistent assessment criteria.
-  **UZBEKISTAN:** Excessive bureaucracy, poor curriculum integration, inadequate mentor engagement.



Challenge 1. Weak or Inconsistent Mentoring

While some mentors are highly effective, many have not received training in mentoring, feedback, observation, or modern teaching approaches.

Challenge 2. Limited Communication and Alignment

Common concerns: unclear expectations, inconsistent assessment practices, insufficient supervisor visits

Challenge 3. Theory-Practice Mismatch

Universities tend to promote communicative, student-centred methodologies, whereas many schools continue to rely on traditional, textbook-driven, teacher-centred approaches.

Alignment Between Universities and Schools

Schools and universities share the same **ultimate goal** — preparing competent teachers. However, significant differences remain regarding:

- Teaching methodology.
- Assessment expectations.
- Roles and responsibilities.
- The balance between practical teaching and administrative requirements.

Preparation of Mentors and Supervisors

Preparation varies considerably across the region. Participants broadly agreed that both groups need:

- Training in mentoring and coaching.
- Guidance on observation and feedback.
- Shared understanding of assessment criteria.
- Regular professional development before each practicum cycle.



Recommendations:

Strengthen Mentor Support:

- Mandatory mentor training.
- Mentor handbooks and checklists.
- Compensation or workload recognition for mentors.
- Clear mentoring standards and expectations.

Promote Reflective Practice

Improve Communication:

- Regular meetings between schools and universities.
- Scheduled triad meetings (mentor-supervisor-student).
- Clear partnership agreements and memoranda of understanding.

Standardise Documentation and Assessment

A shared regional agenda therefore emerges:

- Professionalise mentoring.
- Build stronger university-school partnerships.
- Create shared standards and assessment tools.
- Increase opportunities for reflection and feedback.
- Ensure the practicum is integrated into broader teacher education reform.