



IMPROVING GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH SUPPORT SERVICES ACROSS THE STUDENT LIFE CYCLE

The Higher Education System Strengthening Activity (HESSA) aims to open doors to meaningful, well-matched student careers. The project seeks to enable and empower students—especially women and marginalized students—to access and succeed in higher education by building co-curricular programs that elevate student “power skills” and global competencies, creating strong support networks that set students up for post-graduation successes.

HESSA supports 15 of Pakistani’s public higher education institutions (HEIs) through six focal areas

1. Financial Aid
2. Career Readiness
3. Student Leadership & Co-Curriculars
4. Alumni Engagement & Development
5. Student Entrepreneurship
6. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM STRENGTHENING ACTIVITY

SIX FOCAL AREAS

HESSA will work with education leaders to enhance or offer new support services to improve student access and inclusivity, success, and retention in higher education.

Financial Aid

Focuses on enhancing student financial assistance mechanisms throughout the entire financial award lifecycle. HESSA seeks to work with financial aid offices at participating HEIs on expanding access and improving supports for students most in need of financial aid, included marginalized students across income level, gender, disability, geography, and ethnicity.

Career Readiness

Focuses on enhancing academic advising services based on student interests and future goals, student career planning and counseling services, industry linkages and placements, and any related employability and job readiness systems and practices in the HEI.

Student Leadership & Co-Curriculars

Focuses on two interrelated components: Student leadership skills development via university practices/interventions, and opportunities for students to positively engage, contribute, develop and strengthen their skills through co-curricular activities and student bodies and societies, as well as through community service projects.

Alumni Engagement & Development

Focuses on building and strengthening alumni associations at participating HEIs, which includes utilizing structures and best practices in alumni engagement to benefit students support services in the HEI. Also includes academia-industry linkages.

Student Entrepreneurship

Focuses on building entrepreneurial mindsets and skillsets among students, particularly students that are often overlooked in entrepreneurial training programs at universities (e.g., women, non-STEM students, marginalized populations). Seeks to compliment and work alongside the related work of ORICs at each institution.

Mental Health & Psychosocial Support

Focuses on enhancing student personal counseling services, support and guidance for personal or academic challenges, health centers, disability and special support services, and developing strategies and practices to better meet student mental health and wellbeing needs.

