An overview of Afghanistan’s Higher Education
Achievements, challenges, future plan

By: Barai Mobarez, Planning, Policy and Legislation Directorate, Ministry of Higher Education
Introduction

• Focused Areas

1. To improve quality of teaching and research and enhance individual and institutional Capacity
2. To increase and manage access to higher education, especially for women and underserved communities
3. To expand and improve the quality of facilities and infrastructure, and
4. To improve the governance and increase institutional autonomy (transfer financial, administrative and academic autonomy to higher Education institutions)

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HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public HEIs</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Instructors</td>
<td>6048</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students</td>
<td>197186</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Undergraduates in the past 3 years</td>
<td>110802</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Graduates in the past 3 years</td>
<td>1584</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Private HEIs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Instructors</td>
<td>12819</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students</td>
<td>225652</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Undergraduates in the past 3 years</td>
<td>86245</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Graduates in the past 3 years</td>
<td>4040</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## Scholarships Awarded Through MOHE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
<th>PhD</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4378</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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In the past 4 years

Individual and institutional Capacity building

1. Establishment of 9 Professional Development Centers (PDCs)
2. Initiation of Afghan Electronic Scholarship Testing System
3. Connected to AFGREN to TEIN and through that to Europe and GEANT
4. Obtained membership of edx and achieved access to Indian E-Learning platform (swayam);
5. Developed Policy and Action plan for E-Learning
6. Commencement of 10 Masters Degree programs
7. Obtained membership in Asian Pacific Accreditation Organization
8. Inclusion in the UNESCO proposal in order to standardize the curriculum and accreditation
9. Established 10 faculties and 44 departments in public HEIs
10. Initiated 40 night-shift HE programs; and
11. Signed 53 Agreements with foreign HEIs.

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In the past 4 years

Equal access to higher education & students support

1. Established 4 Consultancy Centers in Public Universities
2. Established 10 Career Centers in the major Public Universities
3. Increased the enrollment of female students (from 23% to 28%)
4. Developed and implemented anti-sexual harassment, and anti-discrimination and anti-bias policies
5. Construction of 5 new female dormitories (Total 35)

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In the past 4 years

Good Governance

1. Established Scholarship Management System (SMS)
2. Gave Financial Autonomy to 8 Universities
3. Reviewed and Processed 22 Legislative Documents; and
4. Created new and developed websites for the Ministry and 10 Universities
5. Establishment of an independent directorate for the Kankor Examination (Entrance Exam)

Infrastructure

1. Completed 55 construction projects
2. Equipped the science laboratories of 5 universities
3. Created ICT Centers for 7 Universities; and
4. Connected 15 HEIs and 43 Campuses to Fiber Optic Network

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Future Plan

1. Reforms
   1. Structural and procedural
   2. Curriculum
      1. Special Focus on areas such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), mining, construction management, agriculture, information and communications technologies (ICT), healthcare, nursing, business and finance.
   2. Upgrading the qualifications of teaching faculty/cadre at university level
   3. Establishment of an independent and autonomous quality Assurance & Accreditation institute/authority
   4. Promotion of E-Learning

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Future Plans

1. Expansion and improvement of Partnerships with National and international institutions

2. Development of new and Amendment of the existing bylaws, regulations and guidelines

3. Improvement of governance and eradication of administrative corruption

4. Establishment of new disciplines based on market needs

5. Transfer of Academic, Financial and Administrative autonomy (first phase universities).

6. Alignment of the SDGs with the National Higher Education and National budget plan

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Challenges

1. Lack of job opportunities in the market
2. Centralized approach (financial, administrative and academic affairs) makes the achievement of SDGs difficult
3. Insufficient budget (financial dependency)
4. Legal constraints
5. Weak partnerships with international institutions and universities
6. Insufficient facilities and infrastructure
7. Limited number of well trained and qualified academics to meet the increasing demand

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Suggestions & Recommendations

Universities have considerable internal capacities, unique skills and expertise; to utilize these universities need to

1. Inclusion of SDGs in curriculum - University teaching can provide students with the specified knowledge skills and motivation to help them become SDG problem-solvers.

2. Research in SDGs; University research is critical for providing basic knowledge, evidence for policy, solutions, technologies and innovations.

3. Creation of a strong network among universities and educators at national, regional and international levels

4. Initiation of joint researches and degree programs that focus on comparative studies in the LDCs

5. Alignment of SDGs to the national plans; SDGs should be based on the people’s capacity, available resources and local conditions. And the main beneficiaries of the economic or sustainable development should be ordinary people.

6. To promote science, technology and innovation in Afghanistan the Academy of sciences in Afghanistan needs to be supported (technically & financially)

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Thank You

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