



## Education in Afghanistan: Private Higher Education Sector Contribution

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### Abstract

Afghanistan is among one of the poorest countries around the globe. Since the Russian invasion in 1979, it has been the panorama of a series of conflicts that have continued for more than three decades. This is the very reason the economy has not attained a self sustaining stage and consequently depending mostly on foreign aid.

Incidentally population is also growing at fast rate, an estimated 34.3 million people (2012[1]. The large density of population is as low as 40 per sq. km [2]. GDP Per capita growth 5.7 (annual %) (2011)[2]. The fast growing rate of population with very low rate of growth in productivity has been putting the economy of Afghanistan in the whirlpool of poverty. Not to speak of the higher education, in spite of enormous efforts the overall literacy rate could not be increased beyond 34.1%. [3]. (Male 49% female 18%) [3]. The towering rate of illiteracy in Afghanistan is appearing to be the first biggest obstacle to stability and civilization.

Higher education in present day Afghanistan remains a delicate area, hugely dependent upon foreign assistance, having meager resources and weedy infrastructure. Importantly, the system of higher education being encouraged is not in conformity with the traditional and religious value system of the country. During the last decade some serious efforts were made like, the name of the ministry has been changed from 'the Ministry of Higher Education and Vocational Training' to 'the Ministry of Higher Education'. The ministry devised a ten year (2005-2015) [4] plan for the growth of higher education and first, second and third phases of the plan span two years, three years and five years respectively. Clear objectives were set for each phase.

However Private Higher Education institutes also play a very important role in changing the whole scenario of students who are willing to pursue their studies. Therefore, the number of students gaining admission in higher education institutes is increasing every year. At present total number of Government and private universities are 69 and total number of faculties are 285 all over the country in 2011-12. Number of government universities students' are 77654 while number of private universities students are 34713[5].

Consequently, the Afghan scholars, educationists and academicians need to plan upon the overall dynamics of today's Afghanistan, existing system and status of education in general and higher education in particular to devise a comprehensive education policy. They need to develop a practical and concrete action plan so that the people working for the cause of education reach a clear understanding of educational goals and steps to be taken. The policy should also guide the government towards taking revolutionary steps, allocate most of its resources for this department, and employ the available resources wisely.

In conclusion, nothing constructive can be fully realized as long as Afghanistan is in a state of war. Therefore, it is necessary to bring the war to an end and establish peace on a solid foundation so that growth and development of the educational system can be focused.

Key Words: Significance of education, Higher education in Afghanistan, Need for concerted efforts, Guide line towards revolutionary steps.