

Afghanistan

National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

The Ministry of Higher Education is responsible for defining national policies in higher education (<https://www.mohe.gov.af/en>).

Higher Education Policy Documents

What are the current official documents defining the national higher education strategy / policies?

- 2004 Constitution, Article 43 free education for citizens through bachelors.
- Law of Higher Education, 2016
- National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Equity Policy Documents

What broad and specific equity objectives do the policy documents identify?

- “To facilitate equitable access to higher education to all who are academically qualified...” (NHESP p 4)
- “The Ministry has to ensure equal and fair opportunities for all those who are eligible to enter the higher education system. In particular, emphasis will be placed on poor students with potential, the physically challenged, rural people, gender equity, and others who have been particularly disadvantaged in the past. Special attention needs to be given to increasing the number of students and women in higher education teaching positions, especially at the senior level...” (NHESP p 5)
- One of the four major goals the National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2016-2020 is: To increase and manage access, especially for women students and people from conflict and underserved areas; to insure that increased access does not undermine quality improvement. (NHESP II)

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents?

- Female
- Low-income students
- Minority groups: rural students
- Students with disability

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups?

- Yes, increase female participation to 30% of total enrollment and building dormitories for 8000 new female students.

Are there specific anti-discrimination provisions?

- *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women* (ratified by the Government in March 2003)
- Afghanistan does not have a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education. It does, however, have a specific strategy to promote gender equality in higher education: *Higher Education Gender Strategy* (2013); *Policy on Elimination of Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in Universities and Institutions of Higher Education* (2015)

What specific interventions and/or instruments of equity promotion are included in the official strategy and policy documents (monetary and non-monetary)?

Monetary Policy Instruments

- No tuition fees or low fees in public institutions / No fees for certain groups

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

What are the main non-monetary instruments to promote equity?

- Regulations to make the curriculum more inclusive.

Financial Resources

What financial resources does the country devote to equity promotion measures?

- Around 3% of the higher education budget.

Quality Assurance

- The External Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures Handbook indicates that the quality assurance criteria take gender equity elements into account (faculty/staff, students, etc...).

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Who is responsible for monitoring the impact of equity promotion measures?

Gender department at MoHE and gender units at universities, Dep of Policy and Planning

- What instruments, methods and data are in place to carry out the monitoring and evaluation activities?

E&M measures, self-assessment and QA procedures.

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Afghanistan does not have an agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Sources

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