

# Education is the Future

*Rebuilding Higher  
Education in Afghanistan*



**DAAD**

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst  
German Academic Exchange Service

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Welcome to Germany: DAAD intercultural seminar for scholars from Afghanistan

**More information: [www.daad.de/afghanistan](http://www.daad.de/afghanistan)**

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*Dr. Dorothea Rüland*

Secretary General of the German Academic  
Exchange Service (DAAD)



# DAAD

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is the largest funding organisation in the world supporting the international exchange of students and scholars. Since it was founded in 1925, more than 1.5 million scholars in Germany and abroad have received DAAD funding. It is a registered association and its members are German institutions of higher education and student bodies. Its activities go far beyond awarding grants and scholarships. The DAAD supports the internationalisation of German universities, promotes German studies and the German language abroad, assists developing countries in establishing effective universities and advises decision makers on matters of cultural, education and development policy.

Its budget is derived mainly from the federal funding for various ministries, primarily the German Federal Foreign Office, but also from the European Union and a number of enterprises, organisations and foreign governments. Its head office is in Bonn, but the DAAD also has an office in the German capital, Berlin. It maintains contact with and provides advice to its main partner countries on every continent via a network of 14 regional offices and 50 information centres.

The DAAD runs over 250 programmes, through which it funds more than 74,000 German and foreign scholars worldwide per annum. These programmes range from semesters abroad to doctoral programmes, from internships to visiting lectureships, and from information-gathering visits to assisting with the establishment of new universities abroad.

One image has stayed with me ever since the DAAD's first fact finding mission in Afghanistan back in March 2002. Despite the destroyed university buildings, seminar rooms and laboratories, we found incredibly driven students and lecturers brimming with optimism. Afghanistan's young academics are one of its most valuable assets and they are fully committed to creating a better future for their country.

DAAD is investing in these young minds. We have granted scholarships to more than 2,500 Afghan graduates and academic staff between 2002 and 2011. Our foremost goal is to improve the quality of academic teaching in Afghanistan. One step in this direction has been the new Bachelor's and Master's curricula, which have been developed jointly by the German subject coordinators and their Afghan colleagues in eight different areas of study. Former DAAD scholarship holders return to Afghanistan better qualified and to improved academic programmes, and are now reaching thousands of Afghan students as university lecturers.

International exchange and cultural dialogue are important building blocks for sustainable crisis management and conflict resolution. DAAD, the world's largest funding organization for the academic exchange of students and scholars, is committed to supporting Afghanistan over the long term. Our commitment comes in many forms – from scholarship funding for Master's and doctoral students, grants to professionals and managers in Good Governance programmes, to guest lecturers from Germany and German-Afghan university partnerships.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dorothea Rüland".

DAAD Head Office in Bonn



# A New Face in Kabul

Dr. Dieter Ortmeyer is Head of the DAAD Liaison Office

In dialogue: Dr. Dieter Ortmeyer with Prof. M. Osman Babury (below) and H.E. Prof. Dr. Abdul Rahman Ashraf (right)

## What is the focus of your work in Kabul?

The DAAD Liaison Office acts as a hub and interface between the Afghan and German institutions involved in academic development. In Kabul, I am the contact person for German universities, long-term lecturers, lecturers, and department coordinators who travel regularly to Afghanistan to meet with their Afghan colleagues as part of the ongoing efforts to improve teaching and research at the Afghan universities. I coordinate all of DAAD's programme work in Afghanistan.

A particularly meaningful aspect of the job for me is the consulting and support I provide to young Afghan men and women interested in studying at a German university. In Germany there are almost 13,000 degree programmes to choose from, so just about any specialisation is possible. Every year several hundred Afghan university students apply to DAAD for a scholarship to pursue a Master's or doctoral degree. Of course I don't make the selection decisions – nor does the DAAD. Whether they obtain a scholarship is decided by the professors on our selection committee.

## The DAAD Liaison Office is located in Afghanistan's Ministry of Higher Education. What is the significance of this?

DAAD has had a presence in Kabul since 2002 – and since 2006 in the building of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE). This has more than just symbolic value: DAAD's work is by no means a solo effort. It closely coordinates its work with the Afghan government. The long-standing cooperation with the ministry means that we have established a bond of trust and friendship over the years. Relationships are an important factor if you want to achieve something in Afghanistan. As the world's largest funding organisation for the international exchange of students and scholars, DAAD is a highly respected and welcome partner.

## What is the state of higher education in Afghanistan today?

The conditions for students have continually improved and there are significantly more opportunities for applicants. As part of its National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2010 to 2014, the MoHE's goal is to continue to improve the quality of education and at the same time to satisfy the growing demand for a university education.



"In 2002, after the war, the first group of German professors and colleagues from DAAD - including the current DAAD Secretary General Dr. Dorothea Rüländ - came to visit Kabul University. It was a very critical time and unfortunately the University was completely destroyed at that point. We didn't have teaching materials, our laboratories were empty and the total enrolment in public higher education was around 6,500 for the entire country. Today, only by our very committed work and by the strong support of donors and especially the DAAD, more than 81,000 students are enrolled - almost 20 per cent of which are female."

*M. Osman Babury, Professor of Pharmacognosy,  
Deputy Minister for Academic Affairs, Afghanistan*

This is a huge task considering the numbers. In early 2002 there were approximately 4,000 students enrolled. By 2011 there were already more than 81,000, and for 2013, the MoHE has set the goal of 115,000 university placements – and even this would not meet the rising demand. The Afghan government faces the big challenge of being able to provide enough seminar rooms, sufficient facilities and equipment as well as adequately paid teaching positions. This is a huge financial challenge as well.

## What kind of academic degrees do university lecturers in Afghanistan hold?

Thanks to the DAAD, the number of Afghan lecturers with top academic training has steadily increased. From



"Afghanistan and Germany enjoy a bond of friendship that is over one hundred years old. From the first development aid and the beginning of our bilateral cooperation, the education of Afghanistan's young people has played a central role in this relationship. Today, after 40 years of war, German universities are building on this foundation and helping to prepare Afghanistan's young generation for renewal and democracy."

*H.E. Prof. Dr. Abdul Rahman Ashraf, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Berlin*

2002 to 2011, DAAD helped approximately 3,000 Afghan academics further their training. The Master's and PhD degree holders are important multipliers at their universities back home. This is why we will continue to support highly qualified students and young professionals. The number of female university students has increased significantly – it's roughly 20 per cent nationally, and in IT it's even up to 35 per cent.

#### How have the universities benefitted so far from DAAD's support?

DAAD mainly supports the areas of German Studies, IT, Good Governance, the natural sciences, geosciences and economics. German subject coordinators and their Afghan colleagues have, among other things, developed

model Bachelor curricula which have been successfully implemented for years now. In many places they are currently working on Master-level curricula as well. DAAD has funded German guest lecturers in Afghanistan and fellowships for Afghan lecturers in Germany; it has funded training programmes in Afghanistan, donated equipment and other items, and granted scholarships for Master's and PhD degree programmes. Flagship degree programmes and faculties have been created, serving as models for those to come. Entire laboratories have been established and equipped. The faculty deans from across Afghanistan meet regularly at the Ministry of Higher Education. This gives us a chance to exchange ideas, which brings new energy to existing structures and makes for very valuable and productive dialogue among colleagues.

#### What do you find most exciting about your work in Afghanistan?

In my view, education forms the foundation for fair, future-oriented and sustainable development. That is what I am working toward. I am proud to be able to work in Afghanistan. Since 2004 I have learned a lot about the country. The diversity of its languages, ethnic groups, and landscapes fascinates me. Afghanistan is a young and vibrant country: 42 per cent of Afghans are younger than 15! The country is changing so quickly and there is an unbelievable energy and spirit of renewal among the people. Being able to support them motivates me tremendously.

#### How long will DAAD stay in Afghanistan?

In terms of the Liaison Office in Kabul, the answer would have to be: open end. But apart from this office, DAAD will be engaged in Afghanistan over the long term – even after the handover of security responsibilities in 2014. DAAD has supported academic exchange with Afghanistan and the Afghan universities since the 1960's. And this will not change in the future. My dream for the future is that German students also attend Afghan universities as a way to gain experience abroad.



Green Oasis: The Kabul University campus

# Pioneers' Work: Computer Science in Afghanistan

Technology and expertise with support from the TU Berlin

*The IT structures at Afghan universities have significantly improved during the past years. Computer centres provide Information Technology (IT) services, and some Afghanistan universities offer Bachelor's programmes in computer science. Despite these achievements, Afghanistan still needs more computer scientists and IT experts to meet the needs in both academia and society.*

"We were pioneers then, and we're still pioneers today," says Dr. Nazir Peroz. The Kabul-born computer scientist and Head of the Center of International and Intercultural Communication at the Technische Universität Berlin (TU Berlin) did not return to his hometown until 2002. Acting as the DAAD coordinator for IT, Peroz was in charge of overseeing the set-up of IT infrastructures as well as curricula development within Afghanistan's IT departments. The fact that the advancement of science, society and the economy depends largely on information technologies is now commonly accepted. And the numbers show it: IT is the third most popular area of study in Afghanistan, just behind medicine and engineering.

This particularly future-oriented field attracts both young men and young women alike. Balkh University launched its new Bachelor's programme in IT in March 2011 with an incoming class of 89 students; one-third of them are women. They are also taught by female lecturers. The 25-year-old Foawziah Naseri from the University of Herat is participating in the second computer science Master study program for Afghan lecturers at the TU Berlin. As she puts it, "We can use our knowledge to drive progress in Afghanistan."

## Up and running: Computer centres and IT faculties

Creating a future full of opportunity and hope through education and modern IT systems has been the goal of Nazir Peroz from the very beginning. "In order to do this," Peroz explains, "Afghanistan's higher education system needs a sustainable and functioning IT supply." The achievements so far are considerable: Nearly all universities in Afghanistan have access to the Internet. Kabul and Herat have had functioning IT centres for quite some time now, and two more are taking up operation



IT Coordinator:  
Dr. Nazir Peroz, TU Berlin



in Mazar-i-Sharif and Nangarhar in 2011. Each facility functions as the primary competence centre for all IT-related issues within its university, providing the academic community with all the necessary network services and IT resources.

In 2002 Kabul University was the only Afghan university with a department for computer science. Now the number of IT faculties across the country has grown to seven. All seven of them offer BA programmes based on a curriculum developed with colleagues in Berlin.

The DAAD-funded activities not only focus on academic programmes but also on the training of IT specialists such as systems administrators and technicians as well. As multipliers, the lecturers share their newly acquired skills with their home faculties. So far they have trained over 2,700 university members in Kabul alone. The goal is for all university IT systems to be managed and operated by Afghanistan's own IT specialists. This is already the case at Kabul University.

## Connecting to the international research community

Since 2007, young lecturers with BA degrees who are interested in deepening their expertise have the option of enrolling in a Master's programme or signing up for an intensive summer or winter session training course



Highly appreciated: Abed Nadjib from the Embassy of Afghanistan congratulates graduates from the Master's programme in IT at the TU Berlin

at the TU Berlin. Scholarships for these programmes are funded by the World Bank and the DAAD. "The Master's theses all focus on the current needs within Afghan society, such as the development of software for use in public administration or concepts for IT infrastructures. The results of their work and research can be put into practice immediately," explains Nazir Peroz. After two years of study abroad, the first 24 Masters in Computer Sciences returned to their home universities in March 2010. Returning to Afghanistan as multipliers, they are already continuing the important task of building academic structures in the area of information technology. At the Ministry for Higher Education's 6th IT Conference in Kabul, for example, they presented their projects to an audience of over 250. In January 2011, 24 more Master's candidates from seven Afghan universities took up their studies at the TU Berlin.

Despite the progress made, Nazir Peroz does not consider his job done. There are still far too few computer scientists and IT experts in Afghanistan. "The process of establishing expertise is a long one," emphasises the computer scientist. "And Afghanistan still needs our support in this process." Peroz envisions a national IT research centre to help the country connect with the international research community. Also in the planning is a society for computer science, which is an organised network for IT professionals, much like Germany's Gesellschaft für Informatik (GI). As Peroz sees it, an organisation such as this would provide the ideal platform for computer science faculties not only to connect with other IT faculties both within Afghanistan and around the world, but to establish themselves as the 'go to' authorities on IT for business, society and politics.



## Highlights

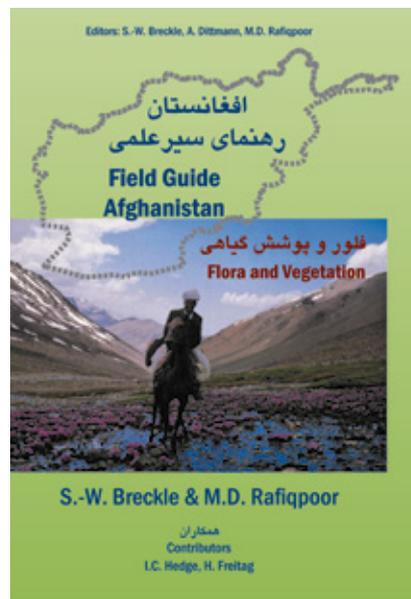
- Cooperation with computer science faculties and departments: Kabul University, Herat University, Khost University, Balkh University, Nangarhar University, Kabul Polytechnic University and Kabul Education University
- Computer centres established at the universities in Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar and Mazar-i-Sharif, as well as numerous PC labs
- Training programmes at universities
- Founding of an IT Department at Afghanistan's Ministry of Higher Education in Kabul
- Development of a Bachelor-level curriculum
- Specialised computer science libraries set up at Kabul and Herat Universities
- Master's programme in IT created at the TU Berlin for Afghan lecturers
- Organisation and implementation of IT conferences
- Founding of an IT association in Afghanistan (planned)

## Field Guide Afghanistan

### Amazing plant diversity

Afghanistan is home to more than 4,000 plant species, many of which can now be found – and researched – in the newly published *Field Guide Afghanistan*. This 870-page plant atlas, with scientific descriptions and pictures, provides a first-time, comprehensive look at Afghanistan's vegetation. The DAAD-financed project is the result of a long-standing research cooperation between Afghan and international scientists. 5,000 copies of the book will soon be distributed to universities, schools and state agencies throughout the country.

“The significance of the book in Afghanistan goes far beyond its purely academic value,” explains the Afghanistan-born scientist Dr. Daud Rafiqpoor, who is now based in Bonn. He led the Field Guide project, which was jointly run by the Universities of Bonn and Giessen, together with Prof. Dr. Siegmund Breckle and Prof. Dr. Andreas Dittmann. “The entire society benefits from the atlas, because it preserves traditional knowledge about the plants' healing powers. This is highly respected in Afghanistan.”



universität  **bonn**

Moreover, by studying the nation's flora and focussing on its commonly-held natural and cultural heritage, the Field Guide plays an important role in the identity building process within Afghanistan.

## German-Afghan University Guest House



The Guest House as a place of dialogue: DAAD Head of Section Lars Gerold (left) together with former Director of the DAAD office in Kabul, Khesrau Arsalai

decided to build the guest house in 2004, and DAAD coordinated the project. “Over 80 per cent of the apartments are usually booked,” says Brigitte Meier. The former director and her staff handed over the management of the facility step by step to an Afghan team, which now operates the guest house on its own. “For me the guest house is an oasis of openness and dialogue,” a guest comments, attesting to its success.

### Meeting place

Kabul has had its own guest house for academics and researchers since 2006. The apartments of the German Afghan University Guest House provide accommodations to university professors and a place for them to meet. The governments of Germany and Afghanistan

## The DAAD Foundation

### Privately-funded scholarships

University-level education is still not a matter of course for Afghan women. That is why a German patroness decided to help make a talented young Afghan woman's dream come true. With the help of the DAAD Foundation, she financed the student's two-year Master's programme in Germany. The DAAD Foundation gives private individuals the opportunity to financially support young, up-and-coming academics from both Germany and abroad. The DAAD handles the selection process and provides support services for scholarship holders during their studies. The sponsorship need not remain anonymous – the two women, the Afghan student and her German sponsor, met in the summer of 2011.

## Kabul University

### 50 years of German Language and Literature

In 2012 the German Language and Literature Department not only celebrates its 50th anniversary but 10 years of successful rebuilding. The German library has over 1,000 volumes available to students, and each year the department receives more than 100 applicants for its Bachelor's programme. The fact that in Afghanistan, German is now just second to English as the research language makes Kabul graduates much sought after. "They go on to teach German to other faculties and universities," explains the professor for German language and literature from University of Duisburg-Essen, Rupprecht S. Baur, who has been in charge of coordinating the German studies cooperation since 2003. The DAAD-supported Kabul lecturers are now able to share their know-how nationwide with 1,000 students across all disciplines.

After successfully setting up a modern Bachelor's curriculum, Kabul University is now beginning to develop a Master's programme in German. The project will kick off with a joint German-Afghan-Tajikistani Master's programme in "German as a foreign language". The programme is currently being set up at the University of Dushanbe and will serve as a training programme for the Afghan lecturers.

## Afghanistan Student Conference in Bonn

### Diplomacy in miniature

Quo vadis, Afghanistan? This was the driving question for 60 young adults who participated in the International Afghanistan Student Conference (ASC) held December 4–7, 2011 in Bonn, Germany. The student conference was a joint event organised by the German Atlantic Association (DAG), the DAAD and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The DAAD selected 14 participants from a pool of more than 200 Afghan applicants. Together with students from other countries, they developed ideas for taking Afghanistan forward in areas such as security,

economics and politics. The student conference took its cue from the International Afghanistan Conference, which was held at the very same time in Bonn. A total of 90 delegations from around the world gathered for the International Afghanistan Conference to debate about the future of the country. The students had the opportunity to meet with high ranking politicians, gaining first-hand information and insights about the situation in Afghanistan. The junior diplomats presented the results of their work to the public during the University of Bonn's "Dies Academicus" (University Day).

## Natural Sciences



Herat Faculty of Science: Donated microscopes are used during applied scientific training

### Setting the standard at Herat

When it comes to teaching the sciences, Herat University offers an innovative and application-oriented approach. Some 500 young women and men are currently enrolled in the Mathematics, Physics, Biology and Chemistry departments. "Herat's Faculty of Science is the country's flagship faculty," says Stephan Ruscheweyh, a mathematics professor at the University of Würzburg. He has been responsible for getting the faculty up and running in 2003.

The DAAD financed the teaching materials and the academic exchange of students and teaching staff. Each new group of Bachelor's students has its own lecture hall and lab work is carried out in well-equipped laboratories. "We don't pull out the modern equipment just for visitors – lab work is an event in its own right," emphasises Dr. Baker Farangis, a guest lecturer from Germany who spent four years organising the rebuilding efforts in the area of physics. The natural sciences faculty at Nangarhar University in Jalalabad is also being brought up to date with the help of German support.



Petersberg in Bonn: Venue for the International Afghanistan Conference in 2001



H.E. Rüdiger König,  
German Ambassador to Afghanistan

## Good Governance in Afghanistan

DAAD scholarship holders from Afghanistan become tomorrow's leaders

*The first round of Afghan DAAD scholarship holders at the University of Erfurt's Willy Brandt School of Public Policy completed their Master's degrees in the summer of 2011. They are now qualified to assume leadership positions in public administration and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). They have returned to their country to help build effective civil institutions in Afghanistan.*

Niamatullah Sayer has been back in Kabul since August 2011. The programme manager and legal advisor went to Erfurt in 2008, where he completed a Master's degree in Public Policy on a DAAD scholarship in the "Public Policy and Good Governance" programme. He is set to take on a leadership position in the Afghanistan government this year.

"I have several options," says Niamatullah Sayer. He is currently working as a political consultant for the Ministry of Agriculture, which has offered him a management post in the higher civil service. There is another job waiting for him in one of the Afghan government's anti-corruption organisations. His prospects are good. "There's still plenty of corruption in Afghanistan and I have not had much contact with the ministries," adds Niamatullah Sayer. His training in Germany has made him a stand-out, and he has been noticed by many. "I hope that I can start making a positive difference in Afghanistan soon."

"Our Afghan graduates are prepared to handle all forms of public administrative decision making," says Professor Frank Ettrich, Director of the Willy Brandt School. They learn how to analyse specific problems and are given an array of methodological tools to work with, "such as econometric models, quantification methodologies for projects and tools for project accounting," says Ettrich, listing just a few. Once equipped with these



tools and know-how, they are able to manage projects run by the Afghanistan government, NGOs and international groups.

The Master's programme also focuses on teaching students how to communicate analyses and results effectively to stakeholders. For Professor Frank Ettrich it is also important for Afghan students in Germany to come into contact with embassies and international players. "This gives them the chance to experience how potential partners think and act."

A total of 37 Afghan students have enrolled in the Willy Brandt School in Erfurt since 2008. Thirteen of them completed their Master's in June of 2011. As of this year, fourteen students are in their second year of study and ten new Afghan DAAD scholarship holders have joined the programme.

"To fight corruption we need professionalism and transparency," stresses Mohammad Hossain Torabi. Like Niamatullah Sayer, the Afghan economist is one of the first graduates from the Erfurt programme. His goal is to find a business and finance position in his native province Herat.

## Well received and highly committed

"As a rule, our graduates are very well received in Afghanistan's ministries and regional administrative offices," says Frank Ettrich. A cooperation between DAAD and the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM) – itself a joint venture of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the German Federal Employment Agency – helps place graduates in the right administrative positions back in Afghanistan. "Return of Talents" is the name of the jointly run programme – and it is off to a good start. Seven of the current Erfurt graduates have applied for placement through the programme. Five are back in Kabul and three already have a good chance of being offered a management-level ministry position. Niamatullah Sayer was among the graduates who contacted the CIM placement specialists.

The Erfurt programme also includes the option of an internship at an Afghan government ministry or NGO. Up to three months in duration, these internships provide graduates with a valuable stepping stone to future

positions. Once the graduates have been placed, they remain in close contact with DAAD and the university through organised alumni initiatives.

The Master's programme includes didactic elements, which means that graduates can be integrated into university curricula or other training programmes as instructors. In this way, the graduates act even more as multipliers back home. Faiz Mohammad Zaland is a good example of this. Back in Afghanistan, he works as an instructor in one of the Afghan government's training programmes. He passes on what he has learned in Germany: "I want to work together with other Afghans to stabilise my country and help give all Afghans a chance to lead a successful and fulfilling life." For Frank Ettrich, this is an area to focus resources: "There are several ways for our graduates to contribute to education and training in Afghanistan's public administration."



## Good Governance in Afghanistan

Many of the setbacks in Afghanistan's reconstruction efforts have resulted from insufficient administrative know-how. Each year, the organisation Transparency International publishes its annual Corruption Index, which measures a population's own assessment of corruption in its country. In 2008, the index considered 180 countries – and Afghanistan ranked 176th.

Good Governance means exactly the opposite: A transparent and effective political administration, that includes citizens in the decision-making process, informs them and provides them with social services. Participants in the **Good Governance in Afghanistan (GGA)** project are meant to play a key role in achieving this. GGA is a DAAD initiative that has been integrated into the German government's Afghanistan policy and implemented jointly by DAAD and the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy at the University of Erfurt. It prepares Afghan university students for careers in Afghanistan's public sector. The programme begins with a nine-month preparatory course, which is specially tailored to Afghanistan and its current situation. This is followed by the two-year international Master's degree programme – the Master of Public Policy (MPP).



Visit to Berlin: DAAD scholarship holders from the Good Governance programme meet members of the German Parliament and political officials from the Federal Foreign Office

“I’d like to see an Afghanistan that can stand on its own feet. It’s up to the young, forward-looking generation to make sure peace, stability and prosperity return to my country. Key political and administrative positions must be filled with people who will drive change – and I want to be one of those people. The DAAD scholarship has given me the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to prepare for my future in a vibrant, international environment.”

*Hajar Mobarez, DAAD scholarship holder since 2009 in the Public Policy Master’s programme at the University of Erfurt*



“The future of science in Afghanistan will depend on whether we can transform our traditional educational system into a modern one. Afghanistan needs to shed its status as an outsider to the world community. DAAD has helped us here, by building a bridge to the international scientific community and to international scientific standards. Thanks to the DAAD, not only do all of our departments at Kabul University have good contacts to German researchers, we also have a modern Internet centre to keep us connected to the rest of the world.”

*Dr. Sardar Mohammad Kohistani, a former DAAD scholarship holder and currently a research associate at Kabul University, earned his Diplom and PhD in Geography at the Justus Liebig University Giessen from 2005 to 2009.*

“The DAAD scholarship changed my life. Here in Germany I am learning how high-level research is conducted at universities and in industry. Science in Afghanistan is not yet research-oriented. The biggest obstacle to progress is not the poor university facilities, but the mentality of the people. This needs to change. And for this we need the DAAD exchange programmes.”

*Mohammad Reza Sharifi, DAAD scholarship holder and Master’s candidate in Electrical Engineering at the RWTH Aachen University*





“The tradition of academic exchange between Germany and Afghanistan is a long one. I myself was a DAAD scholarship holder at the University of Bonn in the 1970’s, where I finished both my Diplom and doctoral degrees. I am pleased to see the DAAD so committed to strengthening the partnerships between German and Afghan universities. Afghanistan can learn a great deal from a highly-developed country such as Germany. The cooperation with German universities accomplishes what Afghanistan is not yet able to do on its own, and that is to educate a new generation of young and committed researchers. And thanks to the DAAD and the German universities, the scientific institutes at my own university have access to quality research equipment.”

*Dr. Mohammed Saber, Chancellor of Nangarhar University*

“The culture of research and teaching in Afghanistan was blotted out by decades of war. Afghan students and university lecturers often receive their first real exposure to scientific research in Germany. At our institute, we raise awareness for issues that are pertinent to Afghanistan’s development – natural resources, water supply, and environmental protection. It’s an approach that allows society to benefit from the knowledge gained through academic exchange. Without the support of DAAD, this kind of continuous development would not be possible.”

*Prof. Dr. Jean Thein, Professor of Geology at the University of Bonn*



“My country needs to make changes in all areas of society – not just in politics and economics. I am pleased that the DAAD shares this view and provides support to our scientists. After completing a Bachelor’s degree in Pakistan, I had a problem when I returned, because my field of study does not exist in Afghanistan. But thanks to the DAAD, I was able to continue my studies at a very high level in Germany. When I return home, I would like to pass on my knowledge to the next generation. Afghanistan needs its own scientists to solve its own problems.”

*Anna Mehmood, 27, received a DAAD scholarship from 2007 to 2009 for her Master’s degree in Molecular Life Science at the Jacobs University in Bremen.*



## Tailored to the Needs

Bochum University trains young Afghan economists

*Students of Economics across Afghanistan study according to a single, internationally recognised curriculum. The Bachelor's degree programme is fully implemented. Now the task is to define the Master's and PhD curricula.*

Zarifa Jalali was fortunate: In 2009, she was accepted into a DAAD-sponsored programme that re-opened economics as an area of study. Professor Wilhelm Löwenstein and his team from the Institute of Development Research and Development Policy (IEE) at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum (RUB) created an internationally recognised Bachelor's programme together with the RUB Department of Economics and Business Administration and their colleagues from Afghanistan. The goal of the programme, which is supported by the government of Afghanistan as part of its national university strategy, is to bring lecturers in Afghanistan up to the level of their international colleagues by 2014.

### State of the art knowledge for the Bachelor's

The new Bachelor's programme is a success story. From 2004 to 2010, it was gradually introduced into all economics departments across Afghanistan. 11,000 new textbooks in both English and Dari were printed in Germany and distributed among the Afghan universities. But the centrepiece of the programme is the training of

Afghan lecturers in Bochum, since it is these lecturers who will be responsible for implementing the new curriculum in Afghanistan. The Bachelor's programme provides participants with state of the art knowledge and an internationally recognised BA degree.

The results are impressive. By the end of 2010, 72 young Afghans had successfully completed the Bochum programme. Today, all economics departments across the country are teaching according to the new curriculum. "A total of approximately 5,100 students are being trained according to the Bochum standards," explains Wilhelm Löwenstein. "That represents about 95 per cent of all economics students in Afghanistan." By 2013, the final year of the programme, over 90 lecturers will have returned to Afghanistan. "The country will then have enough qualified instructors to train its own young economists over the long term." Once a year, Löwenstein's institute evaluates how many alumni actually continue to teach at Afghanistan's universities. Until now, all have remained true to their task.

BA-degree holders can also build upon their qualifications by obtaining a Master's degree in a two-year programme in Bochum. While it carries the same status as the regular MA degree at Bochum, the Master's is tailored to the needs of the Afghans. All coursework is in

Economics Coordinator: Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Löwenstein, Ruhr-Universität Bochum (RUB)

English and also includes training in scientific writing so that candidates can improve their written English. The first 17 Afghans completed their Master's degrees in 2010. In 2011, another 30 candidates were selected from six Afghan universities to participate in the second round of the Master's programme.

## First doctoral candidates in Bochum

After successful completion of the Master's programme, degree holders are required to spend two years teaching in Afghanistan. They are then eligible to pursue PhD studies at the RUB in Germany. "We have accepted our first doctoral candidates for the fall of 2012," says Löwenstein. Two candidates are confirmed and two more are expected. "In the long term, Afghanistan's universities need lecturers with doctoral degrees so that they can offer Master's programmes in line with international standards." There is certainly no lack of interest on the part of the students. "Most students would very much like to complete their studies with Master's and PhD degrees," says Zarifa Jalali. But they lack the financial resources to study abroad. "This is why internationally recognised degree programmes in Afghanistan are so important."

At the same time, there is greater need for economics and business expertise as commercial activity begins to increase in the major cities and with neighbouring countries. Companies need qualified personnel in order to grow these relationships. Gholam Hassanzadah, director

of the Siemens office in Kabul, would prefer to staff all of his business units with Afghan employees. "Every private company is looking for people who have some knowledge of marketing and who can effectively manage the finances," he says. According to Hassanzadah, this also applies to the public sector and to non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Zarifa Jalali's goal is to obtain her PhD degree and to help support progress in Afghanistan in the economic sciences and in research. She notes the particular lack of social and economic data available on Afghanistan. Jalali wants to be a role model for young Afghan women, so that the number of women working as university lecturers continues to grow. "Across society, it remains difficult for women," she says. "But the situation improves with each passing day."

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## Highlights

- 2002: The Institute for Development Research and Development Policy (IEE) at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum develops a unified 3-year BA programme in cooperation with the economics department at Kabul University and gradually with all other economics departments in Afghanistan.
- 2004: The Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) approves implementation of the programme in all universities
- 2004: Joint development of up-to-date teaching and learning materials; distribution of 11,000 textbooks
- 2004 to 2010: 72 Afghan lecturers participate in a combined total of 800 months of training in Bochum
- Fall of 2007: Beginning of Master's programme in Management and Economics for Afghan lecturers
- 2010: The first 17 lecturers successfully complete the Master's programme
- 2011: 30 additional Master's candidates are accepted to the programme





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