

## Global Astronomy Survey : Afghanistan

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SPoC Approval: Yes

### 1. Professional (Research) Astronomy:

(i) Number of universities offering Astronomy: NONE

(ii) Number of universities offering Physics:

Kabul University - University of Jalalabad- University of Kandahar

University of Mazar-e-Sharif - University of Herat.

(iii) Number of academics who have been trained in Astronomy (ideally

with their names and levels of qualification) :

Recently nobody has been trained in Astronomy - The only record we have

is from year 1988 when the first Afghan Astronaut Abdul Ahad Momand

and another alternate for this program Ghulam Dauran were trained

professionally in Russia.

(iv) Number of astronomical facilities (observatories, telescopes, etc)

and as much detail about each as possible (websites/contact details)

No Astronomical facilities,clubs,seminars are provided across Afghanistan.

According to my information as being the Point of Contact for Space

Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) since late 2006, is that in the

whole country, even one telescope is not available. I am the only one

having a tiny 2" Telescope.

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would

you rate your country in terms of Professional Astronomy? Please include

any other relevant information to motivate your choice.)

If you mean that what Phase should my country be counted in, then the answer

is Phase 4. I am also a bit doubtful if it comes in Phase 3 or 4.

Leaving Professional Astronomy aside, even amateur Astronomy is not common in Afghanistan. I have been trying, of course alone, to start some clubs and inaugurate AfghanSEDS (Afghan Student for the Exploration and Development of Space) which is a national chapter in Afghanistan from SEDS and for which I am the president since early 2007.

## **2. Public Understanding of Astronomy:**

(i) What governmental astronomy/science outreach programmes for the public take place (co-ordinated either by government departments or national facilities) :

Neither governmental nor private sectors are involved in promotion of

Astronomy in Afghanistan. I , as the SPoC for IYA2009, tried my best and knocked every governmental door for getting a sponsorship to participate in the innauguration ceremony of the IYA in Paris, and there was NO answer. Even the UNESCO-Afghanistan which spends millions on education in Afghanistan was informed in person to at least promote the IYA2009 in Afghanistan by sending someone to Paris which could attract the media very much, but there response was also NO, SORRY.

(ii) What non-governmental astronomy/science outreach programmes for the public take place (NGO activities or international programmes that your country is involved in) :

I am the only person (of course not praising, but talking the reality)

involved in some projects with Space Generation Advisory Council and

also participated in the 2nd SEDS International Conference held in

India, who is in contact with other international space related

programs.

(iii) Comment on the presence of astronomy in the media (TV, radio,

newspapers). Is it very prominent? Are there specific programmes on

astronomy? Is the media generally willing to publish news on astronomy?

As Space is of a big interest to everyone, media usually publish news

related to new missions to space. Yes, there are a couple of TV

programs specified for Astronomy.

(iv) Comment on the presence of astronomy/science in the general culture

of the people. Are there any specific challenges or setbacks? Is

astronomy a welcome subject of conversation?

Astronomy has never been a welcome subject of conversation in Afghanistan,

Public don't know about modern Astronomy at all. They usually confuse

Astronomy with Astrology.

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would

you rate your country in terms of Public Understanding of Astronomy?

Please include any other relevant information to motivate your choice.)

If you mean that what Phase should my country be counted in, then the answer

is Phase 4. I am also a bit doubtful if it comes in Phase 3 or 4.

The public understanding of Astronomy is in a very bad condition. Some people

like the ones who lived thousands of years ago, still get baffled when you tell

them the simplest fact of Astronomy that "Sun is the center of our

Solar System" (:

### **3. Astronomy in Schools:**

(i) What governmental astronomy/science education and outreach



programmes for schools take place (co-ordinated either by government

departments or national facilities)

NONE

The only Astronomy-related information which school students have

access to, is the 10th Grade Geography study book which has a chapter

on Astronomy with old and even refused theories.

(ii) What non-governmental astronomy/science education and outreach

programmes for schools take place (NGO activities or international

programmes that your country is involved in)

NONE

(iii) Comment on the presence of astronomy in the school curriculum. Is

it part of the school curriculum? Is it very prominent? What age groups?

(iv) Comment on the status of astronomy/science in schools. Are there

any specific challenges or setbacks? Sufficient number of students

studying maths and science? General interest in maths/science/astronomy

in schools?

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would

you rate your country in terms of Astronomy in Schools? Please include

any other relevant information to motivate your choice.)

If you mean that what Phase should my country be counted in, then the answer

is Phase 4. I am also a bit doubtful if it comes in Phase 3 or 4.

In a very bad and even false condition.

There are many who choose Maths and Physics as their first choice in Universities

across Afghanistan. But usually, 50% or more students in these faculties study

because of obligation, not interest. Because there is very low demand for the students

who graduate from such faculties.

