

South Asia Higher Education Symposium: **New Regional Approaches**

April 23-28, 2019 | Istanbul, Turkey



the Hollings Center
for international dialogue



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SYMPOSIUM BACKGROUND

Higher education is often seen as an important investment in dealing with large socio-economic problems and the key to breaking through barriers to national advancement, economic development, and civil society growth. Home to a quarter of the world's population, South Asia's industry and service sectors are growing and creating jobs that require skilled workers. To that effect, many countries in South Asia have recently invested more resources into their higher education systems. Enrollment rates for universities in the region have increased 50 percent over the past ten years, as access has improved and national economies have grown.

In order to address some of the challenges faced in higher education, to share experiences and best practices and to promote new regional partnerships, the Hollings Center for International Dialogue, in partnership and support with the United States Embassy in Kabul, is organizing the South Asia Higher Education Symposium: New Regional Approaches.

Fifty senior higher education administrators and ministry officials from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and educators from around the world will convene in Istanbul, Turkey. The goals of the four-day symposium are:

- to gain a better understanding of the higher educational landscape in South Asia;
- enhancing skills in the areas of curriculum development and reform, quality assurance and accreditation, e-learning and distance education; and
- building external relations with various stakeholders.

Instructive panels led by subject matter experts will be combined with interactive workshops led by participants to achieve the above goals. The symposium will serve as a platform to share best practices, build connections among senior level educators from South Asia, and create university partnerships.

This booklet is a primer for different education systems in the countries participating in this symposium, and is meant to give an economic and demographic snapshot to provide a backdrop to the discussions.

The source of the data, where available, has been relevant government and ministry websites and reports. Basic economic and demographic data was collected from World Bank reports. Other sources are listed at the end of each country page. Although we strived to collect the most recent data, some information that is publicly available for some countries date as far back as 2013, highlighting the necessity for better and more coordinated data collection in the higher education sector.

NOTE FROM THE U.S. EMBASSY, KABUL

U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan would like to welcome you to the South Asia Higher Education Symposium. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our colleagues from the U.S. Embassies in New Delhi, Islamabad, Kathmandu, Dhaka, and Colombo for their help in identifying all of our participants for the symposium.

We would like to thank you for bringing your expertise and experience to the gathering. You, as leaders in your organizations, have the vision, the knowledge, the wherewithal and the experience to help the region pave its way into the future. Throughout and after this symposium, we ask that you stay engaged and build long lasting networks and connections throughout South Asia.

ABOUT THE HOLLINGS CENTER

The Hollings Center for International Dialogue is a non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to fostering dialogue between the United States and countries with predominantly Muslim populations in the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, Eurasia and Europe. In pursuit of its mission, the Hollings Center **convenes dialogue conferences** that deepen channels of communication across opinion leaders and experts in the following areas:

Bilateral Dialogues cover consequential topics that link Muslim-majority nations and the United States. Dialogues center on looking for beneficial areas of partnership between the US and specific countries and regions.

Regional Policy Dialogues engage a broad spectrum of practitioners, academics, economists, civil society leaders and think-tank experts.

Higher Education Dialogues foster exchanges of ideas, expertise, and best practices across university communities in the United States and the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, Eurasia and Europe.

Collective and Human Security Initiative evaluates critical security issues, ranging from the challenges of extremism to regional conflict. The initiative aims to find proactive and positive solutions to these challenges.

Resource Resiliency Initiative aims to foster cooperative solutions to questions of sustainable development. Dialogues focus on issues of water, energy, food, and health.

Responsible Business Initiative explores economic factors and business initiatives that can be used to create more productive and peaceful communities.

The Center **issues reports** on its dialogues and **funds a small grants program**.

The Hollings Center is registered as a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization in Washington, DC, and as a foreign non-profit organization in Istanbul, Turkey.

For more details, please visit www.hollingscenter.org

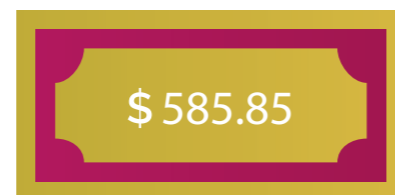
AFGHANISTAN



Population



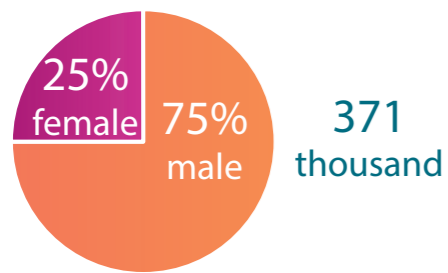
GDP per capita



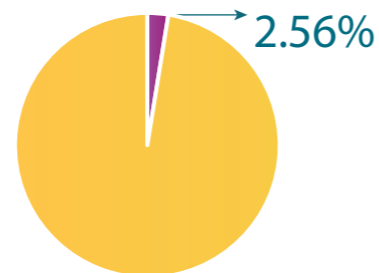
Number of Universities



Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Universities



Public Expenditure on Higher Education as a % of Total Government Spending



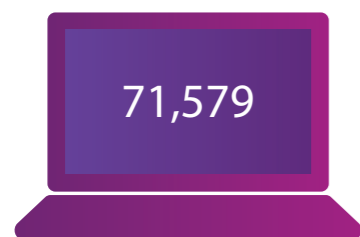
Number of Technical and Vocational Schools



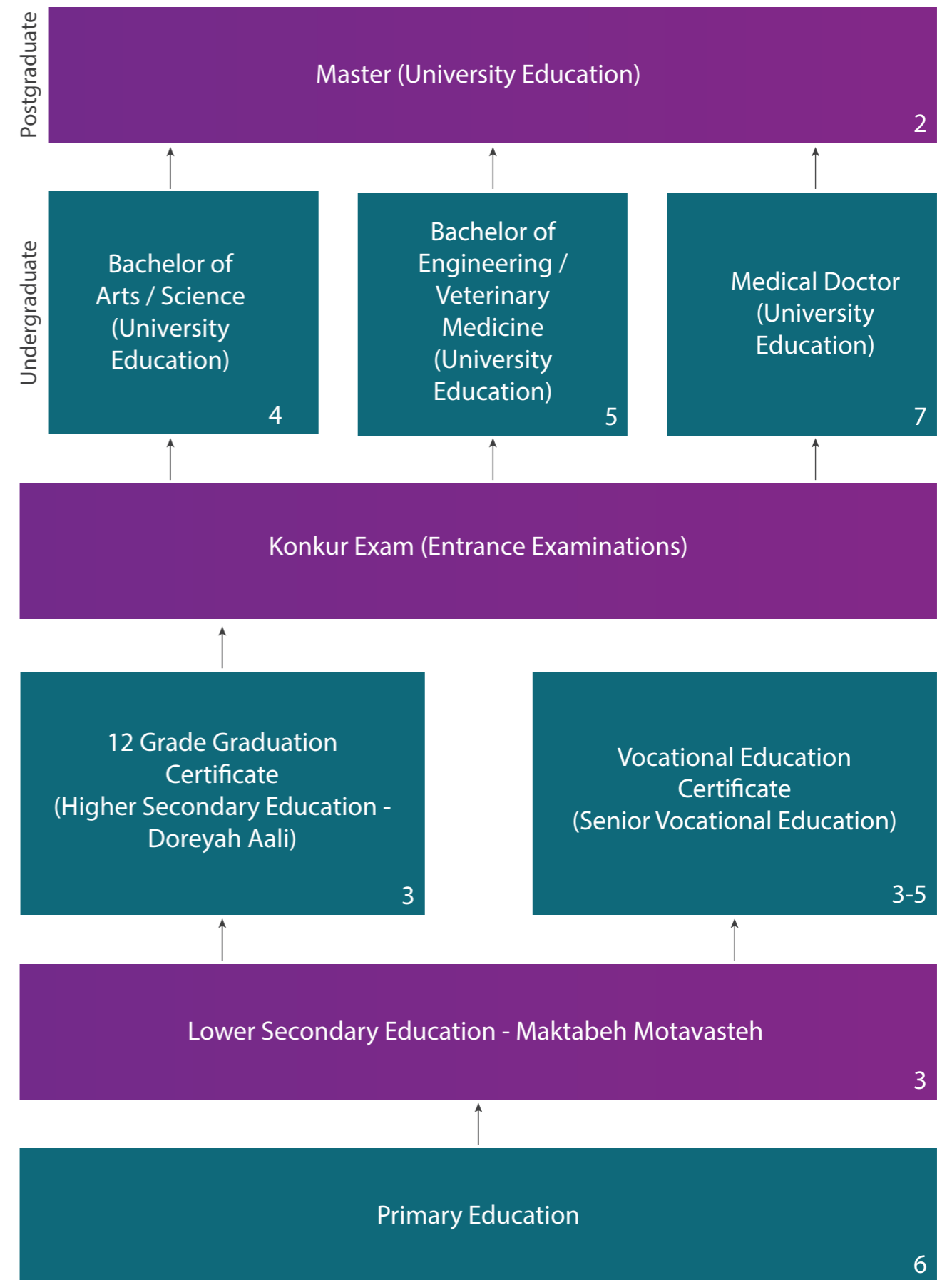
Number of Students Studying Abroad



Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Technical and Vocational Schools



Top 3 Study Abroad Destinations



Note: Not all awards or study patterns are included.
Sources: USAID, WENR, UNESCO Institute of Statistics

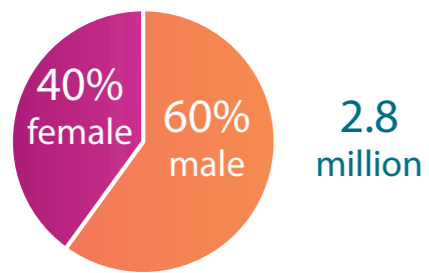
BANGLADESH



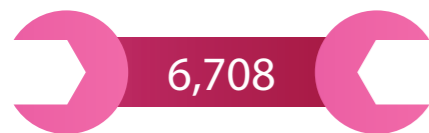
Number of Universities



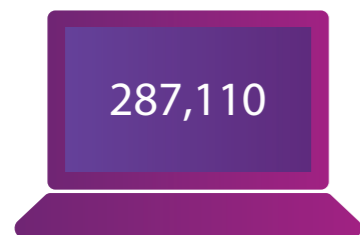
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Number of Technical and Vocational Schools



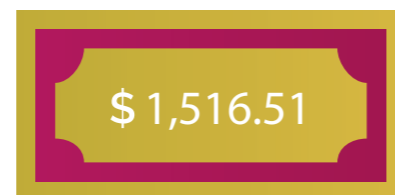
Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Technical and Vocational Schools



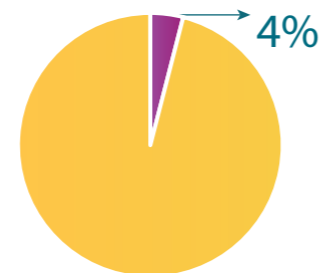
Population



GDP per capita



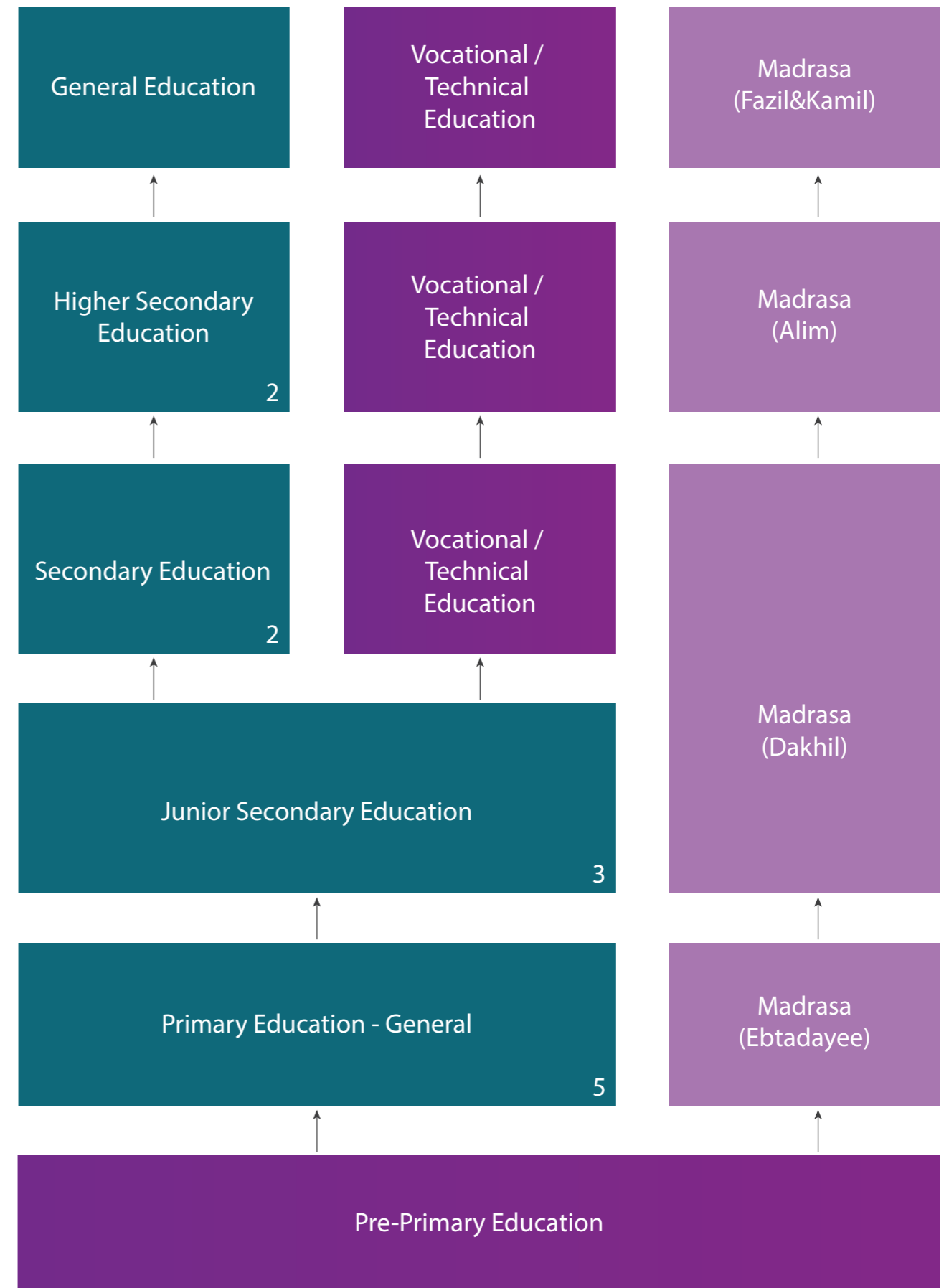
Public Expenditure on Higher Education as a % of Total Government Spending



Number of Students Studying Abroad

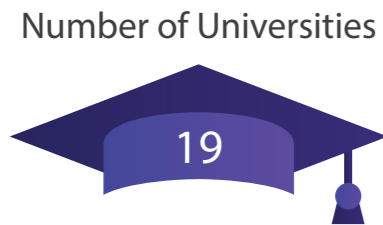
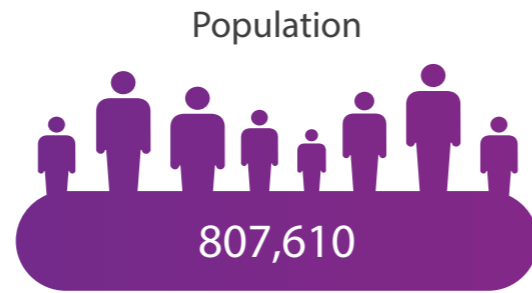
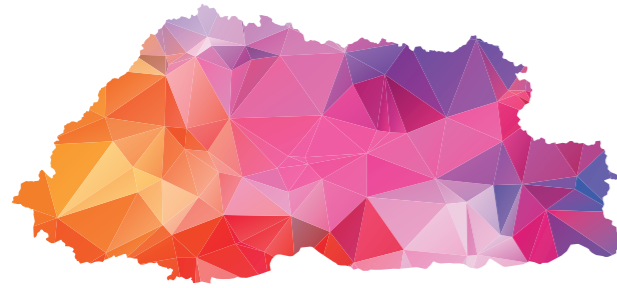


Top 3 Study Abroad Destinations

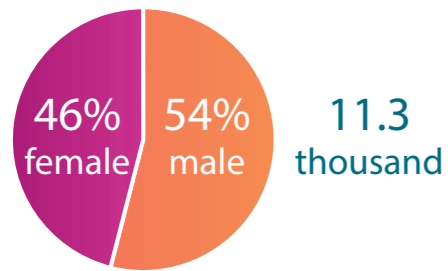


Note: Not all awards or study patterns are included.
Source: UIS data 2017

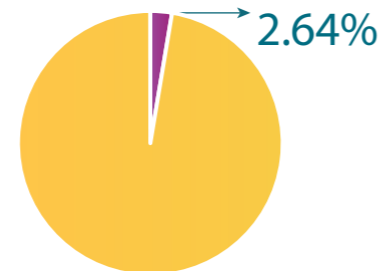
BHUTAN



Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Universities



Public Expenditure on Higher Education as a % of Total Government Spending



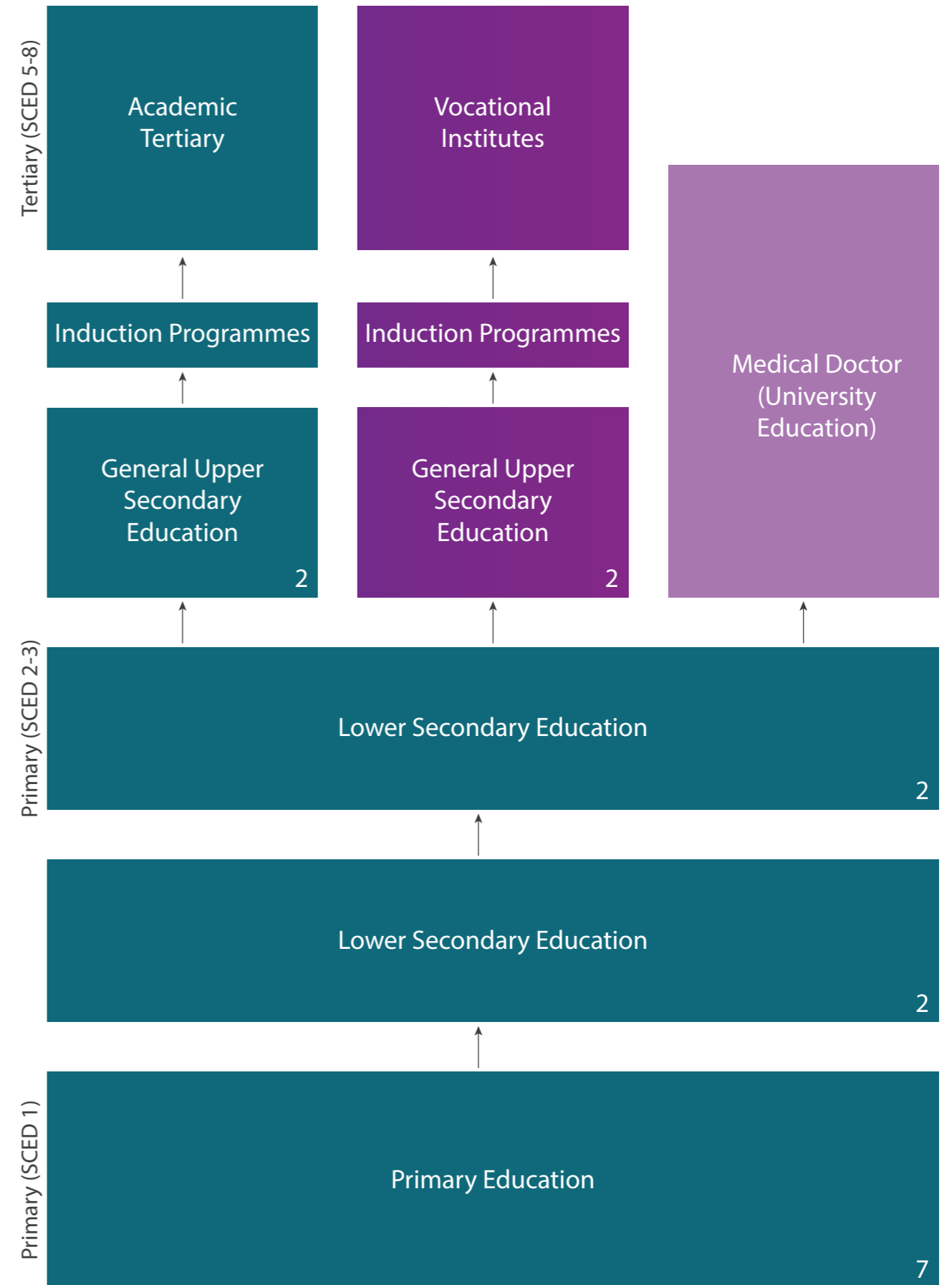
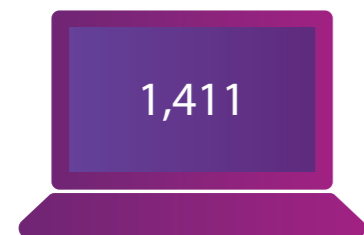
Number of Technical and Vocational Schools



Number of Students Studying Abroad



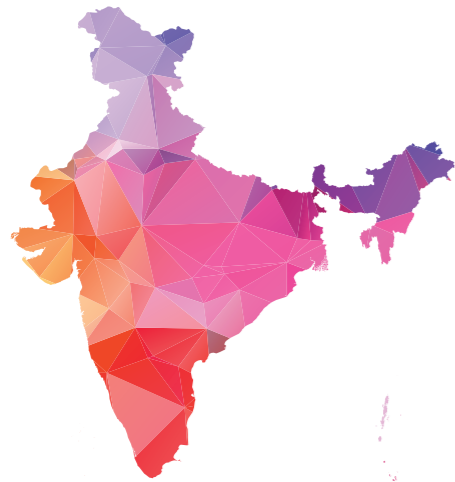
Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Technical and Vocational Schools



Note: Not all awards or study patterns are included.

Source: http://www.dahe.gov.bt/images/pdf/State_of_Tertiary_Educatin_in_Bhutan_2017.pdf

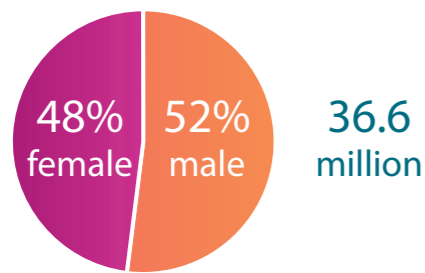
INDIA



Number of Universities



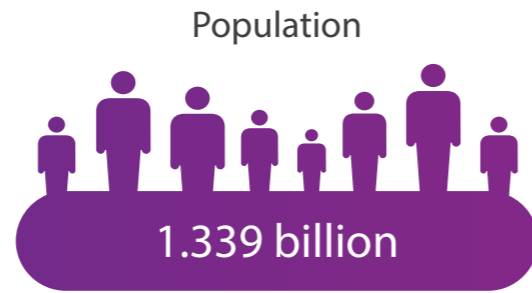
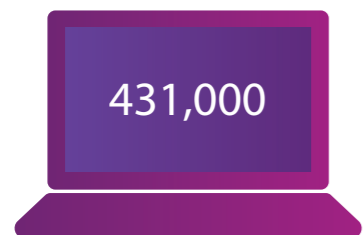
Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Universities



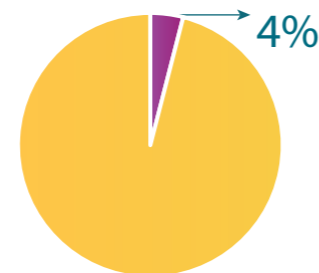
Number of Technical and Vocational Schools



Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Technical and Vocational Schools



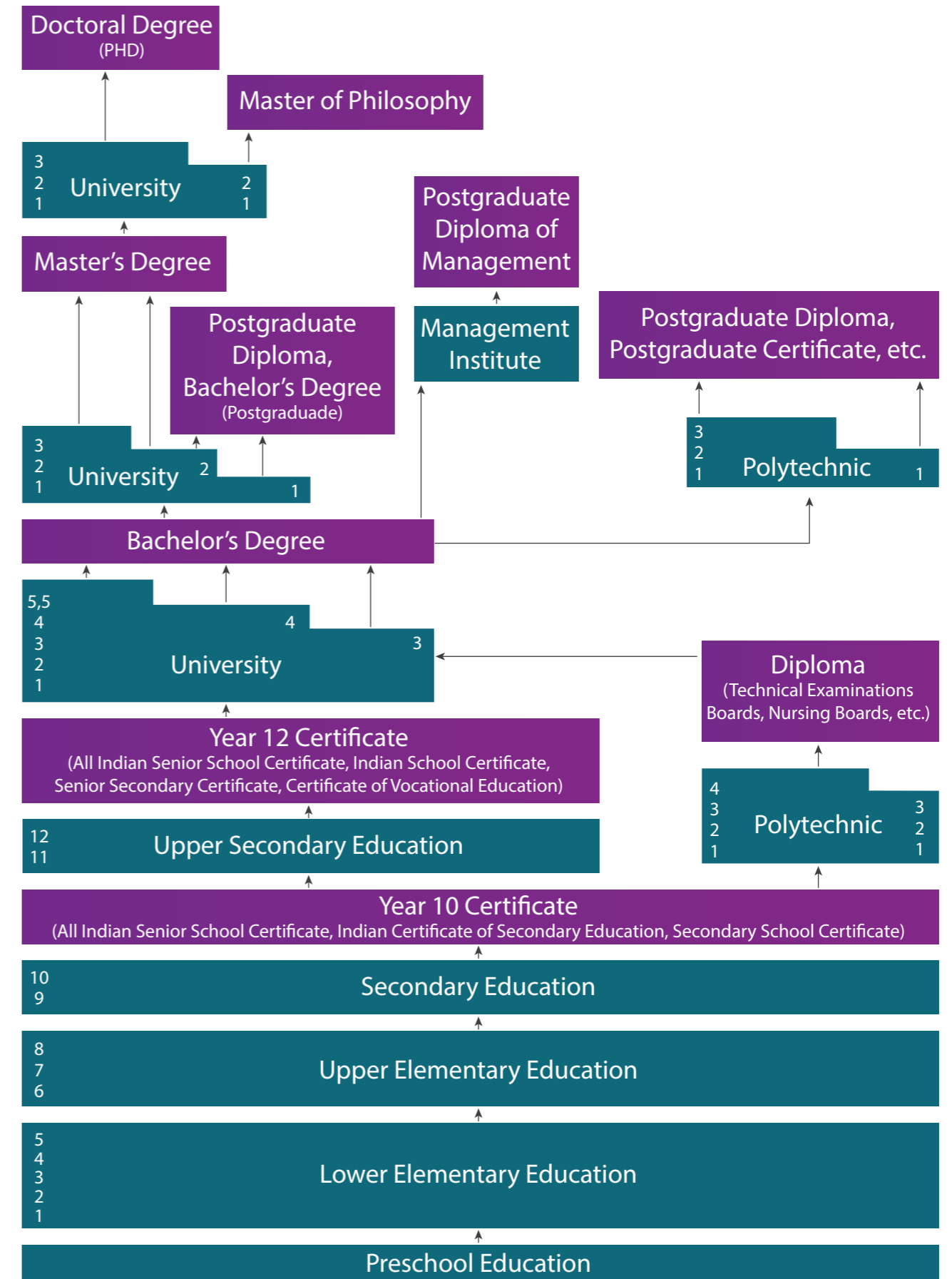
Public Expenditure on Higher Education as a % of Total Government Spending



Number of Students Studying Abroad



Top 3 Study Abroad Destinations



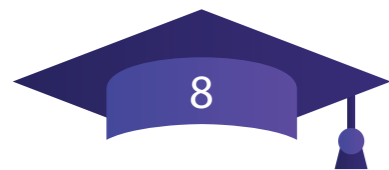
Note: Not all awards or study patterns are included.

Sources: Department of Higher Education, India; AISHE Report 2017-18; WENR <https://wenr.wes.org/2018/09/education-in-india>

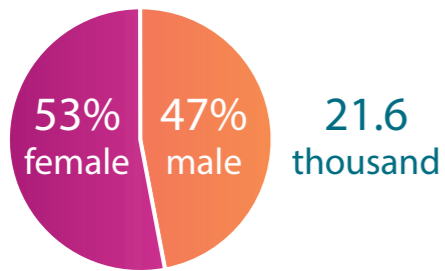
MALDIVES



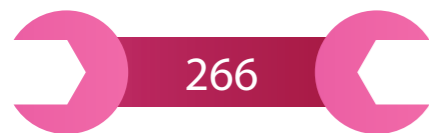
Number of Universities



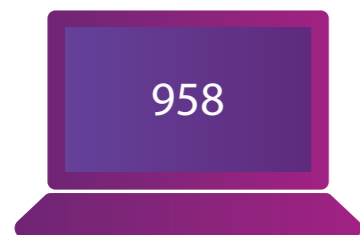
Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Universities



Number of Technical and Vocational Schools



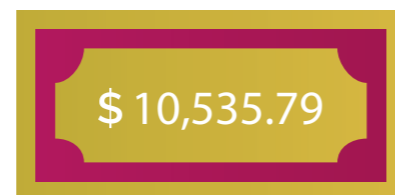
Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Technical and Vocational Schools



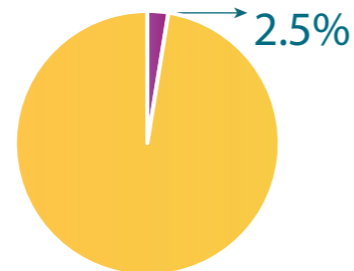
Population



GDP per capita



Public Expenditure on Higher Education as a % of Total Government Spending



Number of Students Studying Abroad



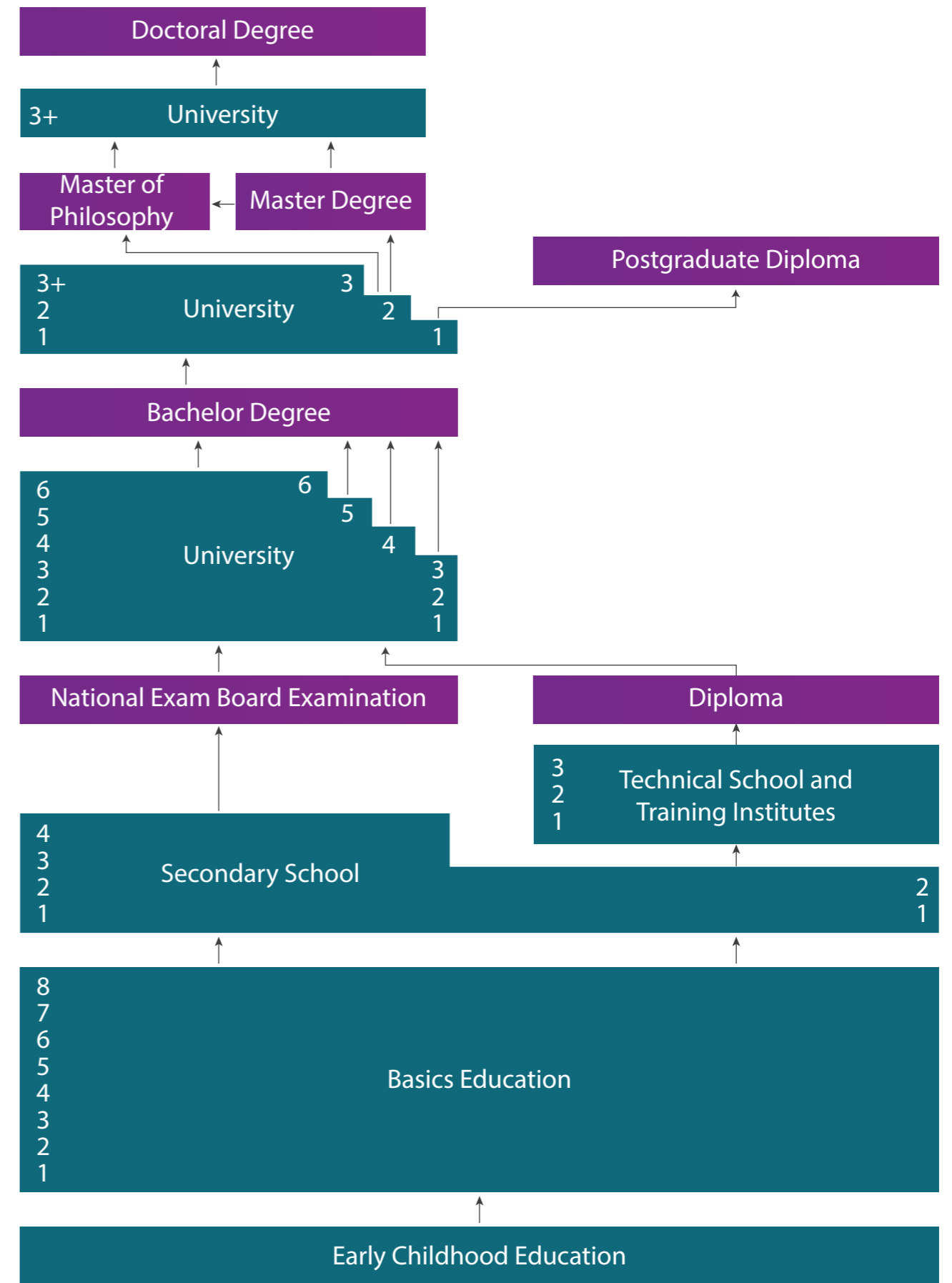
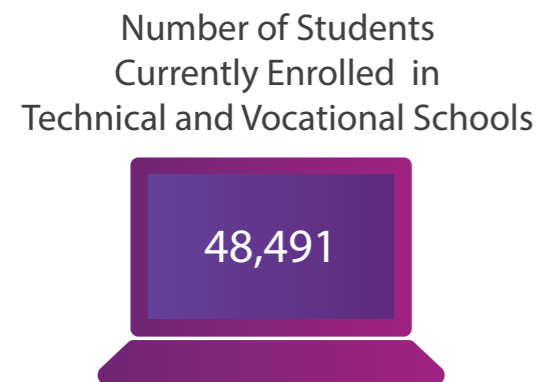
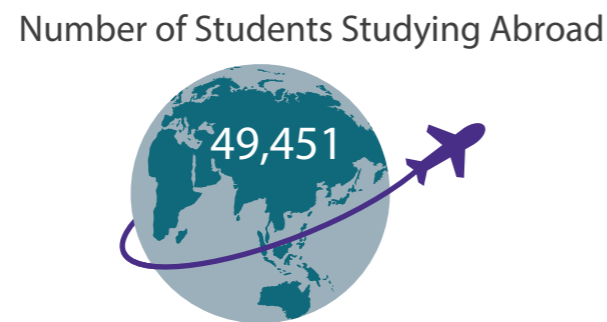
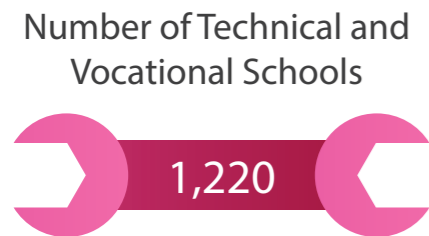
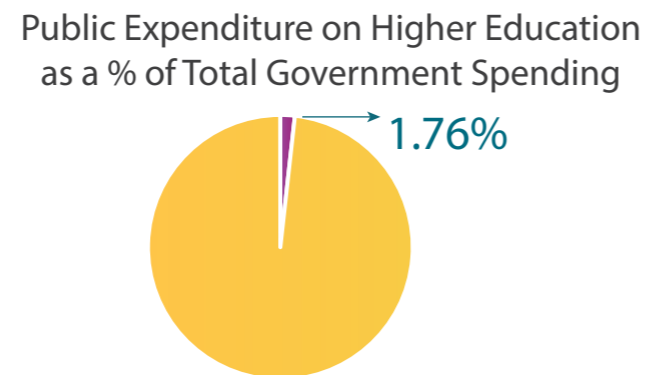
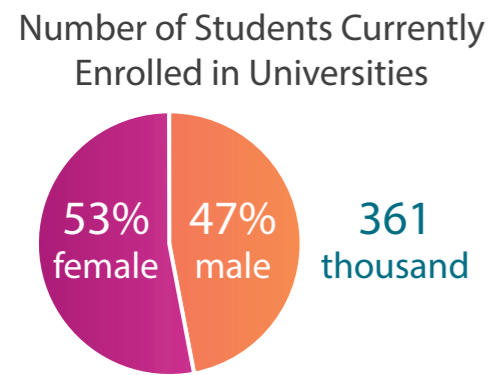
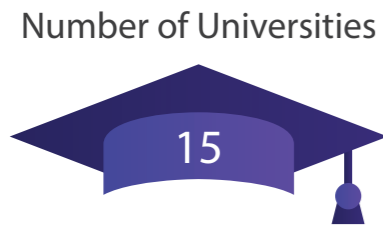
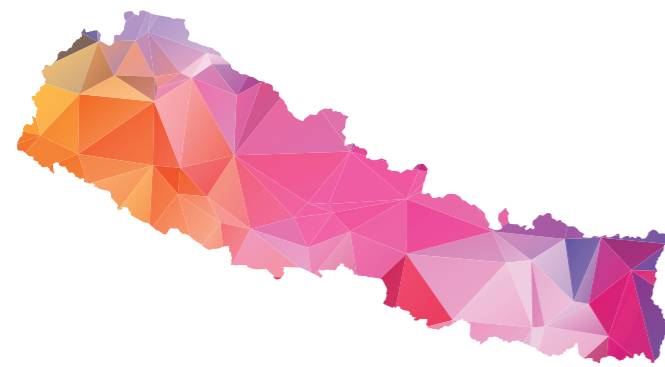
Top 3 Study Abroad Destinations



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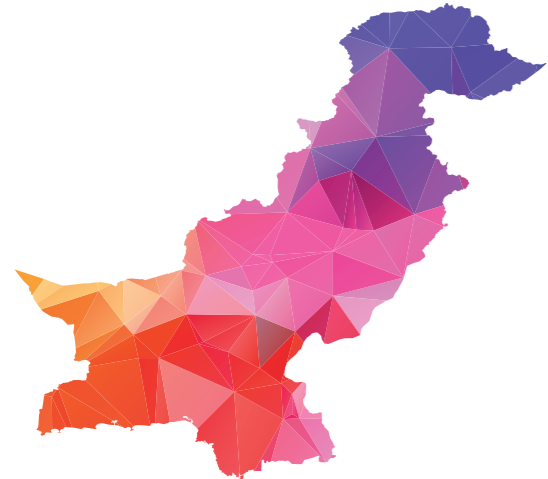
Sources: <http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/yearbook/2018/education/> and <https://dhe.gov.mv/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Registered-Higher-Education-Institutions-as-of-18th-October-2018.pdf>.

NEPAL



Note: Not all awards or study patterns are included.
 Source: https://moe.gov.np/assets/uploads/files/Education_in_Figures_2017.pdf

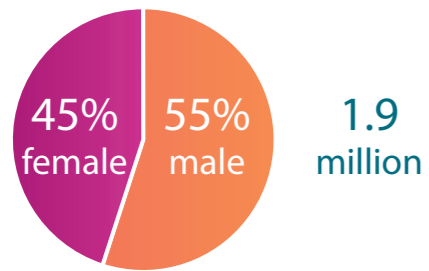
PAKISTAN



Number of Universities



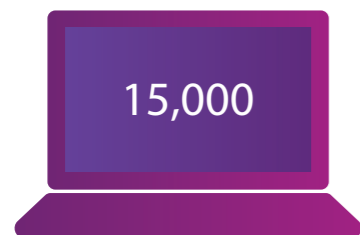
Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Universities



Number of Technical and Vocational Schools



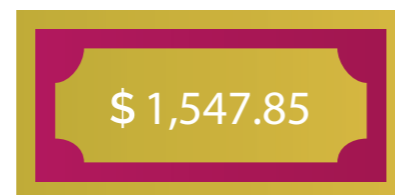
Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Technical and Vocational Schools



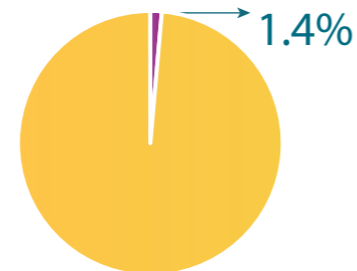
Population



GDP per capita



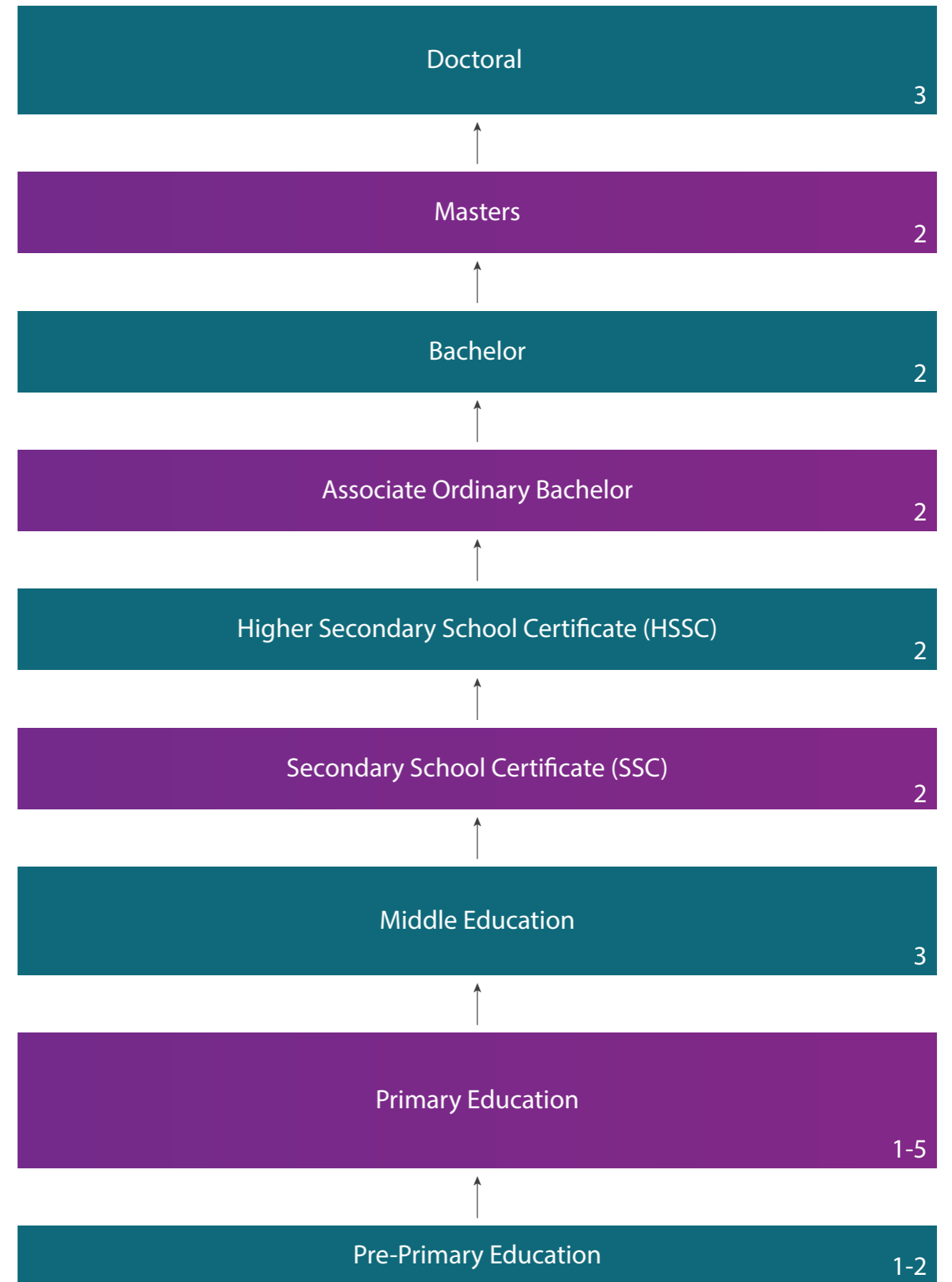
Public Expenditure on Higher Education as a % of Total Government Spending



Number of Students Studying Abroad



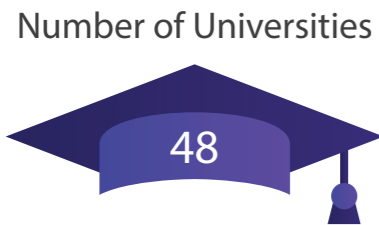
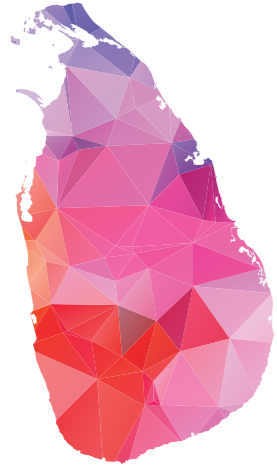
Top 3 Study Abroad Destinations



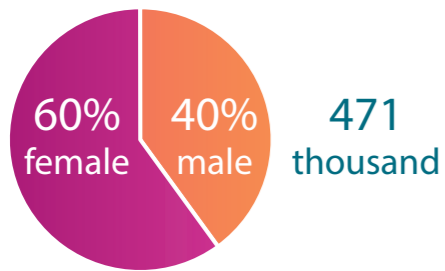
Note: Not all awards or study patterns are included.

Source: The Government of Pakistan, National Technical and Vocational Training Commission

SRI LANKA



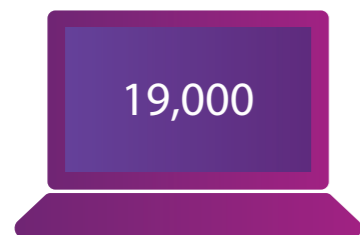
Number of Students Currently Enrolled in Universities



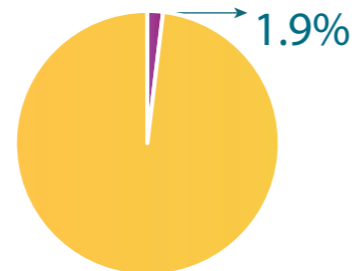
Number of Technical and Vocational Schools



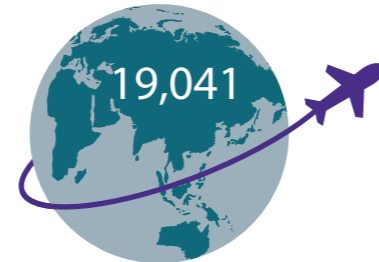
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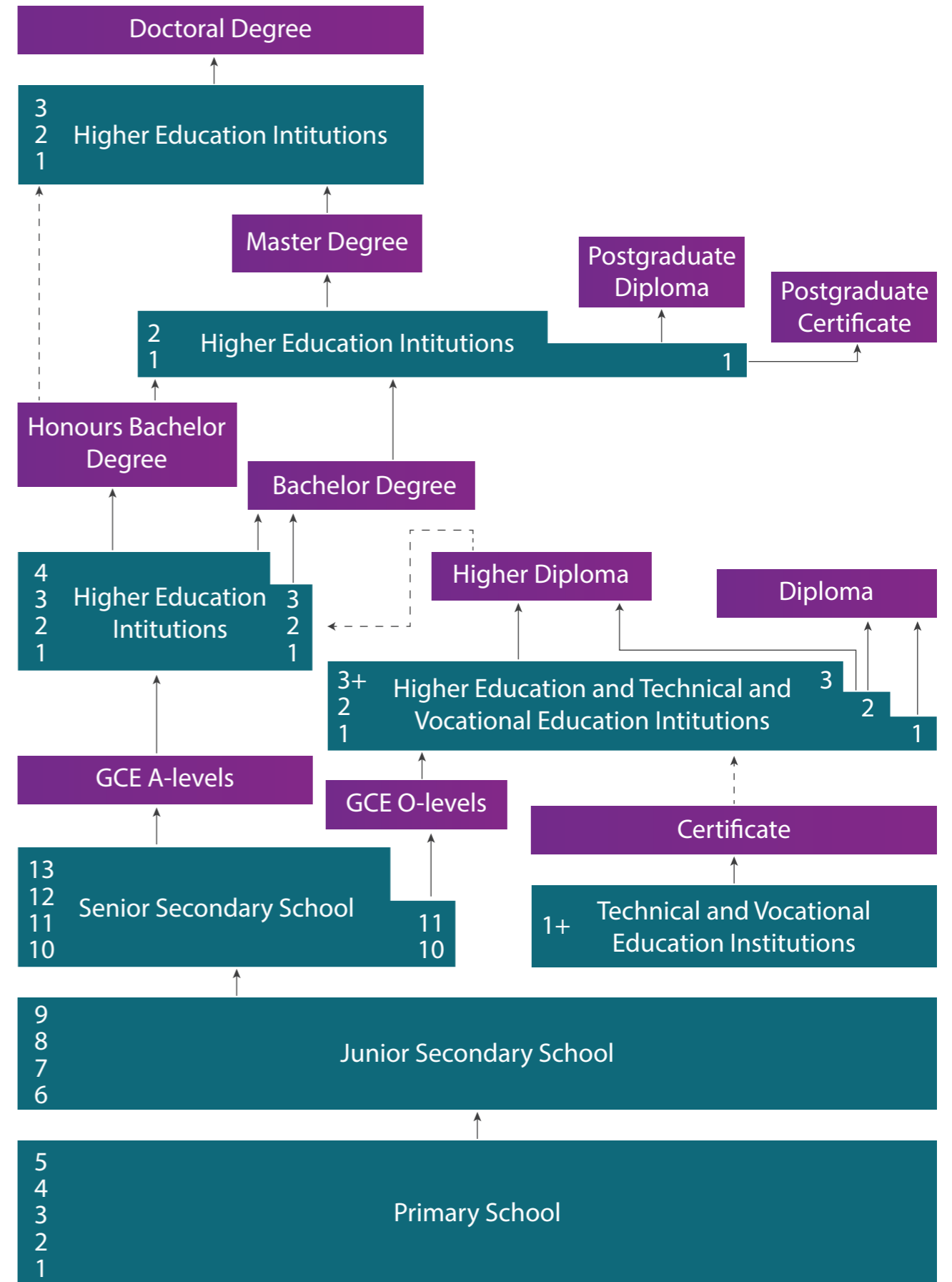
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Sources: Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, Sri Lanka Ministry of Skills and Vocational Development; and http://ugc.ac.lk/downloads/statistics/stat_2015/Chapter%201.pdf <https://wenr.wes.org/2017/08/education-in-sri-lanka>

PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES



AFGHANISTAN

Abdul Khalil Afghani is vice chancellor for academic affairs at Shaikh Zayed University in Khost, Afghanistan. He received his MSc in botany from the Department of Botany at the University of Peshawar, Pakistan in 2000. He also worked as Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture at Shaikh Zayed University. He served as the agriculture economic advisor for DAI, LGCD and USAID. He was also technical advisor for DAIL with DAI, LGCD, USAID. He was the regional manager for Southeast with AWCC, administrator of human resources office with NSP and IRC, interpreter with UNAMA, UNDP and VRP and medical supervisor with GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceutical Company in Afghanistan.

Faisal Amin is director of academic promotion and also associate professor at Kabul University, Department of Sociology. He has over ten years of experience in quality assurance, research, academic promotion and the creation of universities.

Asadullah Aminzai, Chair of International Verification and Diploma Attestation Commission, Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education.

Mohammad Naim Azimi is vice chancellor for academic affairs of Kabul University and member of the Commission for Post-Graduate Studies at the Ministry of Higher Education of Afghanistan. Dr. Azimi leads the main Committee of Self-Assessment and Quality Assurance of the university and is a professor of economics at the Department of Statistics and Econometrics of the Economic Faculty at Kabul University. He is also a member of the Supreme Council of the Central Bank of Afghanistan. His contribution to reform at the university is significant in terms of revising and updating the curriculum, initiating the establishment of new post-graduate programs in social and natural sciences, standardizing research and publications, quality assurance and restructuring the academics and councils at Kabul University parallel with those at regional and international levels.

Dr. Azimi has contributed significantly to research through his multiple publications in national and international journals.

Mohammad Zaher Faiez was born in Bamyan province's Yakawlang district. He graduated from Deh-Surkh high school in 1998 and obtained his bachelor's degree from the Language and Literature Faculty, Persian Department of Kabul University in 2005. He received his master's degree in criticism of literature from Lucknow University in India in 2009. He received his doctorate degree in lyric literature from Isfahan University of Iran. Dr. Faiez was appointed as lecturer at Bamyan University in 2005 and then was assigned as vice chancellor at the same university in 2018, where he still continues in this position.

Masoud Haqbin was born in Sheberghan, Jawzjan province. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Jawzjan in Oil and Gas, and Geology and Mines in 2005. After receiving his education with high levels of success, Mr. Haqbin was employed as lecturer in the Department of Geology, Discovery and Extraction of Oil and Gas, Geology and Mines Faculty in 2006 and became an academic member of Jawzjan University. In addition to his academic affairs and teaching, he later worked as acting administrator

of the Teaching Department from 2007 to 2010. He was also responsible for all arrangement of IT activities in Jawzjan University and for improving and strengthening the IT section. He participated in short term workshops and trainings nationally and internationally (the Netherlands, Turkey, various Arab countries, and India). In 2012, Mr. Haqbin went to Thailand for this master's degree with a World Bank scholarship. In 2015 he successfully completed the program and received his master's degree from the Institute of Asia Technology in Thailand. He returned to Jawzjan University upon his return and followed his academic affairs as a lecturer at the Department of Geology, Discovery and Extraction of Oil and Gas. He also headed the Research Committee of Geology and Mines Faculty. In February 2016, the Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education, with the approval of the Afghanistan Presidency, appointed Mr. Haqbin chancellor of Jawzjan University, where he continues to serve.

Sayed Najmuddin Jalal was born in 1960 in Parwan province. He studied at Kabul Medical Science University in Kabul Medical School and at the Paratyarn Dermatology Unit in Parwan, Iran. Later, he served as ambassador of Dasht Archi district of Kunduz. He also served as the head of the Children's Hospital, and head of public affairs at the High School of Higher Education. He is also a professor at Kabul University of Medical Sciences.

Nasir Kamawal received his medical degree from Nangarhar Medical Faculty. After graduation, he started to work as a lecturer at the Pediatric Department of the Medical Faculty at Nangarhar University. In addition, he also started teaching at Khyber Teaching Hospital to further his education and experience through the support of Health Net Organization. He was selected as director of Nangarhar University Medical Teaching Hospital in 2003 where he worked until 2014. He attended short term courses in hospital management at the Peshawar Provincial Health Service Academy. He traveled to the United States in 2005 to participate in a training on newborns. Upon his return, he was offered to head the Children's Department of the Medical Faculty where he worked until 2014. The Ministry of Higher Education also provided him an opportunity to travel to Germany through a DAAD scholarship in 2009 to be further trained in echocardiography. After returning, he established the Echocardiography Department at the Medical Hospital. Prof. Dr. Nasir Khan Kamawal traveled to Japan in 2012 through the Ministry of Higher Education to further his medical education. After returning from Japan, he established the Medical Education Committee to establish the Department of Medical Education in the Medical Faculty. Currently, Prof. Dr. Kamawal, along with his teaching responsibility at the Medical Faculty, works as vice chancellor in academic affairs at Nangarhar University.

GH. Dastgeer Khawrin has been working as vice chancellor for academic affairs at Shaheed Rabbani Education University (SREU) since March 2016. He received his MSc in biology and teaching methods from the Teacher Training Academy, which was under license of UNESCO. He received his BSc in biology from Kabul University. Before being appointed as vice chancellor of academic affairs at SREU, he taught genetics and biological psychology at SREU. Meanwhile he was also chief of the editorial board of the scientific journal Payam e Marifat. He also worked as a teacher trainer and conducted a series of workshops and seminars for teacher training colleges and teachers of high schools. He also worked as a consultant for UNESCO in 2004 and 2005. Besides his given job, his considerable work for UNESCO was compiled into books, specially a book

titled Education for Peace. He has been awarded the Mohammad Wazeer Akbar Khan Prize (Medal) from the president of Afghanistan. He is currently working on a new text book titled Biological Psychology.

Shamsuraman Rahmani is an active member of society and was raised in an educated family. He received his medical degree from Kabul University of Medical Sciences (KUMS). He is keen to serve Afghan society in the field of education and healthcare. In addition, his communication and leadership skills have served to help his classmates solve their academic and professional challenges. After graduation from KUMS, he became lecturer there. He has published many articles and books and has become a professor. His productivity and struggle paved the ground for him to become vice chancellor at KUMS. He has participated in multiple conferences. His real and applicable insights and experiences motivated him to encourage youth to obtain a better medical education and to have self-reliance.

Sayed Alem Rahmati is from Bamyán, Afghanistan. He holds a master's degree in public law and a bachelor's degree in law and political science. He has seven years of professional experience in administrative reforms, capacity building, performance management development, policy and research at the Afghan Civil Services Commission; and two years of teaching experience at Kateb University. Currently he works as the foreign relations and scholarships director at the Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education.

Shershah Rashad is vice chancellor at Kandahar University. He is a graduate of the M. Azizbekov Institute of Petroleum and Chemistry in Baku, Azerbaijan where he received his MSc in geology in 1986. His first job was at the Institute of Geology, Academy of Science of Afghanistan, where he worked from 1987 to 1993. Afterwards he served as GIS manager at Ogane Survey and Design Company, Japan from 1997 to 2000. In 2001, he was selected as native lecturer of Afghan Pashto language at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (Gengoubunka) Research Institute, Japan.

Khyber Saify is chancellor of Kunduz University. He received his PhD degree in cellular and molecular biology from Shiraz University in 2016. He has 22 articles in the ISI Journal.

Sayed Farhad Shahidzada is general director of academic affairs coordination at the Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education. He founded the public administration discipline and Faculty of Higher Education in Afghanistan. From 2010 to 2016, he was dean of the Public Administration Faculty at Herat University. He holds two master's degrees from Turkey, one in business administration and one in public administration and policy. He has been working since 1999 as associate professor at Herat and Kabul Universities. He has published two textbooks, Fundamentals of Management and Fundamentals of Public Administration.

Sumaira Yaftali graduated from Kabul University of Medical Science. After graduation, she became a lecturer at the same university. Besides working as a lecturer, she worked as an OB-GYN trainee at the Malalai Maternity Hospital in Kabul. She successfully completed her specialization in obstetrics and gynecology. She also completed a fellowship program at Cure International Hospital in Kabul. She actively works as a

professor of gynecology and obstetrics at Kabul University of Medical Science. She is also a member of the national committee on curriculum at the Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education where she works on the development and evaluation of curriculum of all universities in Afghanistan.

BANGLADESH

Gauranga Chandra Mohanta was born in 1962 in Lalmonirhat. He joined the Bangladesh civil service (Admin) in 1988. He is now working as the project director (Additional Secretary), for the Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP) which deals with quality assurance mechanisms, academic innovation and research and education network in tertiary level education in Bangladesh. Dr. Mohanta has a BA (Honors) and an MA in English from the University of Dhaka. He did a PhD in English literature at the University of North Bengal, India. He attended a number of courses both at home and abroad. Dr. Mohanta's hobbies include writing poems and prose, travelling and listening to music. His first collection of poems, *Adhiprantar Jure Chhayasarir* ('A Shadowy Figure Pervades the Agonized Prairie') and a research work, *Robert Frost: A Critical Study in Major Images and Symbols* were published in 2009. *Sunyota o Palokprobaho* ('Void and Feather-flow'), another collection of poems was published in 2012. Two collections of poems, *Trogoner Gan* (Songs of a Trogon) and *Jolmayurer Sato Palok* ('Hundred Feathers of Pheasant-tailed Jacana') were published in 2016. *Jholke Otha Swapnodanga* ('A Gleaming Dreamland') was also published in 2016 in which 63 Tang poems were translated into Bangla for the first time. *A Green Dove in Silence: Forty Prose Poems in Translations* was published in 2018 by Rubric Publishing, Delhi, India. Two books he co-edited are: *Puthi Rahibo Nishani: Heyat Mamud* ('A Commemorative Volume on the Birth Anniversary of the poet Heyat Mamud', 2006) and *Begum Rokeya Smarak* ('A Commemorative Volume on the Birth and Death Anniversary of Begum Rokeya', 2005). For detailed information about Dr. Mohanta please visit www.gaurangamohanta.com.

Shamsad Mortuza, the pro-vice-chancellor of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), is a professor of English (on leave) at the University of Dhaka. He was the former head of the Department of English at Jahangirnagar University. In 2013, Dr. Mortuza was a Senior Fulbright Visiting Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of California, Los Angeles. He attended Birkbeck College for his University of London PhD thesis on contemporary British poetry, which was published by Cambridge Scholars Publishers. As a Fulbright scholar, he went to the University of Arizona for his second MA in American Indian studies. Dr. Mortuza is one of the authors of the English textbook for Class IX-X published by NTCB. He is a key exponent of ULAB's quality assurance team, and serves on the editorial board of a number of journals and magazines.

Farida Nilufar is the dean of Faculty of Architecture and Planning at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka, Bangladesh. She is a professor of architecture. Her research is focused on urban morphology, urban design and

landscape, water urbanism and architectural morphology. She has been working on curriculum development and syllabus review for B Arch degree at BUET and worked as a member of the Education Sub-Committee on Accreditation of Architecture Schools in Bangladesh. She served as a member of the Trustee Board of ABUETA (2013-2018); the president of the Executive Committee, BUET Teachers' Association (BUET TA) (2017); a member of the Committee for Advanced Studies and Research (CASR), BUET (2009-12); and a member of the Committee for the preparation of Master Plan for BUET, (2013 - to date). She had been a member of the National Habitat Committee under the Ministry of Housing and Public Works, Government of Bangladesh, (2016-2017). She served as urban design and architect consultant for the Regional Development Plan (RDP) for Dhaka City (2013-2014) and was an expert member for the Urban Design and Site Planning for the Detailed Area Planning of Dhaka City (2006-2009). She worked as the co-convenor of the International Workshop: 'Urban Thinkers Campus' (UTC) in Dhaka organized by BUET, associate partner of World Urban Campaign (WUC) of UN-Habitat (2015). At present she works as Environment and Urbanization secretary in the Executive Council of Institute of Architects, Bangladesh (IAB).

BHUTAN

Kesang Choden Dorji is the director general of the Department of Adult and Higher Education (DAHE), Ministry of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan. Dorji started her career as a teacher and worked her way up to the position of a school principal. She served as director of the Department of Curriculum Research and Development (DCRD), Ministry of Education and the Royal Education Council (REC) prior to her transfer in 2016 to the Department of Adult and Higher Education. She studied in Loreto Convent in Darjeeling, India, and graduated from Loreto College, Darjeeling, India with a BA (Honors) in history. She holds an MA in history from the University of New Brunswick (UNB), Canada. Her master's thesis is titled, "The Emergence of Modern Bhutan: The Life and career of Jigme Namgay, 1825 - 1881" (unpublished). In addition to obtaining a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and others, she has a diploma in educational leadership and management and a certificate in women in executive leadership development from the University of New Castle, NSW and the University of Queensland, Australia.

Chhime Tshoke Dorjee is a civil servant working for the Royal Government of Bhutan. She qualified through the Civil Service Examinations in 2006 and completed her pre-service training in 2007. She was subsequently appointed in 2008 as a legal officer in the Ministry of Education. She worked in the Policy and Planning Division until 2017. She has worked in the Directorate of Services under the Ministry since September 2017.

INDIA

B. Ananbhakrishnan is a professor in the department of theatre arts, Sarojini Naidu School of Arts and Communication at the University of Hyderabad. He has an MA in Drama and Theatre Arts from Pondicherry Central University, and a PhD in contemporary Malayalam theatre from the University of Madras. Since 1991 he has worked as a researcher in the field of performance and folklore at St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu, and at the University of Calicut, Kerala, before joining S. N. School as an associate professor in 2000. Currently, he teaches production process and contemporary Indian theatre. Specializing in Indian performance studies, he has published articles on Indian theatre in journals such as Theatre India and Theatre Research International, and has contributed to different anthologies and encyclopedia such as the Encyclopedia of Asian Theatre (edited by Sam Leiter, Greenwood, Westport, 2007). As the executive committee member of the International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) and founder general secretary of the Indian Society for Theatre Research (ISTR), he has taken up different research initiatives on theatre to foster the research culture in the field. He has been a fellow at the Interweaving Performance Cultures-International Research Centre, Freie University, Berlin from 2016 to 2017.

Ameena Kazi Ansari teaches in the Department of English, Jamia Millia Islamia (A Central University by an Act of Parliament, 1988), New Delhi, India. Her academic interests are in the area of South Asian literature, postcolonial and resistance writing. She is also a translator of fiction in Urdu/Hindi into English, and has done the English subtitling of documentary films. Dr. Ansari has been the foreign students' advisor of Jamia and also coordinated the Access Micro-scholarship Program in the university's senior secondary school. She was nominated for the International Visitors Leadership program in 2007.

Sunil Bhand obtained his PhD in chemistry in 1996. From January 2001 to December 2002, Prof. Bhand worked as a research associate under a project funded by Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) at the University of Lund, Sweden. Since December 2002, Prof. Bhand has been working in the Department of Chemistry BITS Pilani, a deemed university and an institute of eminence in India. Prof. Bhand has held several key administrative assignments in the university. He was first group leader of chemistry at Goa between 2006-2009. He became the first head of the Department (Chemistry) from 2009 to 2013. Under Mission 2012 Vision 2020, Prof. Bhand was leading the Research Task Force for the university. The university achieved a fivefold growth in research through this mission. Since June 2014, Prof. Bhand is dean (university-wide) of Sponsored Research and Consultancy for its four campuses in Pilani, Dubai, Goa, and Hyderabad. He is coordinating several key research initiatives and internal funding by BITS Pilani. He is also leading the research thrust area under Project Lakshya. Prof. Bhand is an established researcher in the area of biosensors, biochips, bioanalytical chemistry, nanotechnology and environmental chemistry. He collaborates with various national and international groups in India, Sweden, France and United Kingdom. He has published 56 research papers and is inventor of 12 patent applications (PCT, US, UK and Australian patents) of which two are granted. So far seven students have been awarded PhD degrees under his direct supervision, one thesis submitted and five ongoing. Prof. Bhand has secured external research funding worth six million USD from various

national and international agencies (The World Bank USA, Swedish Research Council, RD Tata Trust, Tea Board, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences, UK India Education and Research Initiative UKIERI-DST, Ministry of Human Resource and Development Government of India). He has established a state-of-the-art interdisciplinary biosensor research laboratory in Goa, India. Prof. Bhand is recognized as expert reviewer for The Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF, Switzerland), Indo French Centre CEFIRPA, Department of Biotechnology DBT, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council BIRAC, Indo-Russian bilateral grants, Science and Engineering Research Board, and PATH Innovation Laboratory of Tata Trust. He is actively contributing towards the startup ecosystem as technical director of BITS-BIRAC-BioNEST, a bio- incubator in Goa. Prof. Bhand is also the current chairman of the Indian Institute of Metals IIM Goa Chapter. He is a life member of several scientific societies and member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

K. P. Jaikiran heads the Curriculum Development Division of the Additional Skill Acquisition Program, an ADB-funded mission mode program meant to impart employability skills to graduate students, of the Department of Higher Education, Government of Kerala. He also coordinates the Community College Scheme of Kerala state in the capacity of nodal officer. Formerly he was the program director of the Fostering Linkages in Academic Innovation and Research program, popularly known as FLAIR, a faculty development program of the Department of Higher Education. After completing his master's degree in geology from the University of Kerala in 1990, he pursued research in structural geology that led to a PhD from the same university in 2004. Prior to his joining as assistant professor in geology in 2000, he worked as a scientist in the Central Ground Water Board of the Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India for a short span of three years. His interests in education management started after his postgraduate diploma in education management and administration from the University of Kerala. Six years of involvement in skill development programs for faculty members and students have given him considerable exposure to the field of curriculum development and training management. He has undergone several training programs including international training, quality in higher education of the Quality Assurance Agency, London in 2014. Dr. Jaikiran has presented academic papers in several international conferences across the world. His other interests include writing and he has published two books, Varanasi Vibes' and Air Travel et. Cetera through Amazon's free publishing platform.

Amjad Ali Khan has been actively contributing to policy discussions and public discourse in the fields of education, international relations, and development over the past ten years. His areas of expertise are institution-building, forging strategic partnerships and program formulation. Moreover, Amjad has established strong links with educational institutions, think-tanks, governmental agencies and private sector organizations, both within India and overseas. He is the founding director of the International Summer School, New Delhi—an independent, six-week undergraduate program which runs in partnership with some of the most reputed universities from across the world, under the banner of the Government's 'Incredible India' campaign. Concurrently, he serves as the consulting head of the Esya Centre, a newly established think-tank that focuses on policies pertaining to technology, digitalization, cybersecurity and regulation. Until recently, Amjad was the chief executive of the Centre for Escalation of Peace—an

organization that is engaged with track 1.5 and public diplomacy initiatives. He was also a member of the leadership team of The Royal Academy in Bhutan and had a key role in the setting up of research and professional development systems. His professional journey began at the Planning Commission where he was among the youngest consultants to be under the direct employment of the Government of India. Amjad holds a master's degree in finance and development from the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London and a bachelor's degree from Warwick Business School.

Naima Khatoon served as professor and chairperson in the Department of Psychology before joining as principal at the Women's College in July 2014. Prior to that she was professor as of July 2006, associate professor as of April 1998 and lecturer as of August 1988. She also taught at the National University of Rwanda, Central Africa for one academic year. Prof. Khatoon holds a PhD in political psychology from the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). She has attended and presented papers in a number of national and international conferences. She also visited and delivered lectures at the University of Louisville, USA and at the University of Alba Iulia, Romania. She has authored, co-authored and edited six books and published a number of papers in reputable national and international journals. She has supervised fifteen PhD theses and a large number of dissertations. Her area of specialization is in the field of clinical health, and applied social and spiritual psychology. She also served as the deputy coordinator of UGC-assisted Special Assistance Program on Spiritual Psychology in the Department of Psychology, AMU. Apart from her academic endeavors, Prof. Khatoon has vast experience in educational administration.

Tariq Mansoor is vice-chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, a historic and prestigious seat of learning established in 1920 by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the great social reformer of 19th century India. Born in a family of eminent academics, he was the principal of Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College and head of the Department of Surgery in the Faculty of Medicine, Aligarh Muslim University. A surgeon by profession with more than three decades of teaching, research, clinical and administrative experience, he has around 90 publications to his credit and supervised the theses of more than 50 postgraduate medical students. He was a member of the Medical Council of India, the apex regulator of medical education and profession in India, and sits on the Board of Governors of the Indian Institute of Management (Lucknow), Governing Body of the Maulana Azad Education Foundation (Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India) and the National Monitoring Committee for Minorities Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. He recently represented India attending the first India-Indonesia Inter-Faith Dialogue in Yogyakarta, Indonesia as part of delegation of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. He was elected president of the Association of Surgeons of India (UP), Secretary of Aligarh Muslim University Teachers' Association and thrice as member of Executive Council of Aligarh Muslim University representing the teaching faculty.

He was conferred with the 'Sir Syed Lifetime Achievement Award for Public Services 2017' by Aligarh Medical Alumni Association of North America, USA for his distinguished services to AMU and is a recipient of 'Eminent Senior Surgical Teacher Award 2013' by the Association of Surgeons of India (UP). He regularly sits on selection panels of teaching staff in various Indian universities and has served as an assessor for the Union Public Service Commission. Prof. Mansoor has travelled widely and visited important

educational and cultural institutions in North America, Europe, West Asia, Southeast Asia and Africa. A keen tennis player, he has reading interests in education, history, international affairs and politics.

Furqan Qamar in his present position as the secretary general of the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), is the principal executive officer of the largest and one of the oldest networks of universities. In his illustrious career, Dr. Qamar has held the position of the vice chancellor of the University of Rajasthan and the Central University of Himachal Pradesh. He has also served as advisor (Education) in the Planning Commission of India. Essentially a professor of management, he has keen research interest in public policy, planning, administration and financing of higher education, and has numerous publications in journals of repute to his credit. Dr. Qamar has chaired and been member of a large number of committees and working groups at the national and international level. Dr. Qamar brings with him academic eminence, leadership qualities and exposure to best global practices.

Vanita Shastri is dean of Global Education and Strategic Programs at Ashoka University, India. In this role she leads all international partnerships and manages study abroad and student mobility. Prior to this she was the founding dean of the Undergraduate Programs at Ashoka, where she built the undergraduate program, to help establish an outstanding undergraduate student experience at the university. Previously she was the executive director of TiE-Boston. Shastri has a PhD from Cornell University and has taught at Boston University, University of Massachusetts and Wellesley College. She has also been a policy consultant at Harvard University, where she wrote a number of policy papers, including one on the "Software Policy of India" for the Government of India. Shastri was part of the founding team at Redwood Investment Systems, Inc. where she set up their wholly owned subsidiary in India and directed their global operations. Shastri is an educationist, an entrepreneur and an artist. She has founded two non-profit organizations, including the Meru Education Foundation in the US, and the Habitat Learning Center in Delhi, India. She is the author of two books, The Salem India Story and a co-edited book called, Social Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability in Business. She is also a trained Indian classical dancer.

MALDIVES

Aishath Safoora currently works as the principal of the Centre for Higher Secondary Education (CHSE). The school is a government high school located in the heart of the capital city of Male and is the longest servicing school since 1979 which has continuously produced the best national A-level results and local subject results. In addition, CHSE is recognized at the National A-level Top Achievers Award held every year by the Ministry of Education of Maldives. At CHSE, they follow the British Edexcel A-level curriculum and have English as the medium of instruction. Safoora is dynamic, enthusiastic and passionate. She has a love for learning and has kept herself motivated for 18 years in the

education field. She is passionate to work with students, teachers, and parents to meet their needs and school goals. She always creates a happy and productive environment. Her objectives include developing overall student progress, providing positive learning experiences as well as building and maintaining effective behavior management systems. She enjoys sharing knowledge, inspiring and creating an effective conducive learning environment for all. Safoora is experienced in leading, adept at training, motivating and developing others. She has been involved in teaching since finishing high school in 1995. Her love for teaching expanded in 1996 when she started her career as a middle school mathematics teacher, and after three years pursued her first BSc degree from Bangalore University. Immediately after completion of her degree she continued her career as a high school mathematics teacher at CHSE. After three years she received her master's degree under the Fulbright scholarship program. She is the first Maldivian Fulbright scholar who graduated from Ohio State University in December 2006. Upon returning from the United States she was promoted as a senior assistant principal, then two years later as the principal of the school. During this time, she has been actively teaching educational degree and later on master's courses as a visiting lecturer. She has taken professional development training sessions and would like to get better training to be in line with the new research and technology findings. She has initiated many community service programs to create empathy and an understanding of helpless children and people in the community. During the past seven years, they have collected clothing and household items for children in shelters in Male. Under her leadership, they have always tried to build leaders for a globalized world with an understanding of the diversity that they will encounter in the future. They prepare students to be responsible and confident and to take on their career path of interest.

Aishath Shaheen is the deputy vice chancellor for research and innovation of the Maldives National University (MNU). She has a master's degree in human resource management and before joining MNU she worked at the President's Office. As the deputy vice chancellor of MNU, Shaheen currently oversees all the research activities and chairs the Maldives National University Research Grants Committee, Research Ethics Committee and the Committee on Courses. She is also a lead researcher in various research projects that are undertaken by the Maldives National University. She is a member of Special Awards Committee of the President's Office and a member of the Maldives Qualification Authority Board. Shaheen has taught management and human resource management subjects at the university and has conducted training in related areas for both public and private sector organizations. She has also developed textbooks for 'Employment Relations' and 'Performance and Reward' for the human resource management course conducted by the Centre for Open Learning at MNU.

NEPAL

Bal Chandra Luitel is a professor at Kathmandu University, educated in Nepal and Australia. Luitel's expertise as a transformative education researcher lies in

employing multi-paradigmatic research design for portraying the problem of culturally decontextualized mathematics and science education, a protracted problem that poses a serious challenge towards an inclusive and life affirming mathematics and science education in Nepal, a country that hosts more than 92 language groups and different cultural traditions arising from Vedic, Buddhist and Animist belief systems. Luitel has been working with a number of Nepali teachers and teacher educators who examine their lived experiences as students, teachers and teacher educators, thereby developing visions for fostering experiences of meaningful mathematical learning among their students. In this process, Luitel's research program enables education researchers to engage with a host of research paradigms together with new analytics arising from dialectical, metaphorical, poetic and narrative logics and genres as a means for conceiving, expressing and implementing visions of an inclusive and life-affirming mathematics and science education in Nepal.

Indu Acharya is professor of political science at Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Her PhD dissertation was on women in leadership positions of major political parties of Nepal. She has 30 years of experience in teaching. Acharya has contributed to the education sector policy domain in the capacity of high-level education policy committee of the Government of Nepal for several years. She served as a member of Quality Assurance and Accreditation (QAA) Technical Committee of University Grant Commission of Nepal, and as a consultant quality assessor with QAA/UGC Nepal. She has participated in several quality assessment missions and has conducted several research projects and evaluations on various aspects of the higher education sector of Nepal. She has also contributed to several research papers and articles on the issue of women in politics and on contemporary political issues in Nepal. Acharya received a diploma on community development from St. Xavier University of Canada, Nova Scotia. She also participated in a summer school on American government and democracy at Illinois University, USA as a Fulbright fellow.

PAKISTAN

Nadeem Akbar is country director of the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (a bi-national academic and research institution) in Islamabad. He is a former Fulbright fellow and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA. His field is public policy and public administration. He has over 20 years of professional work experience in the field of research and academic exchanges between the US and Pakistan. As director of the institute, he administers and promotes exchange of scholarship, organizes policy forums and facilitates collaborative programs between U.S. and Pakistani institutions of higher learning. Working with a consortium of 38 U.S. universities, he has been instrumental in facilitating several US-Pakistani university partnerships and faculty development forums. He was a major stakeholder in initiating a pilot project on community college trainings for faculty with Punjab Higher Education Commission, Lahore in which PHEC was supported by U.S. community colleges for capacity-building

and training of selected Pakistani college faculty in the US. Additionally, being a member of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) – a group of 27 academic centers around the world – he plays a key role in promoting academic and research collaborations with CAORC member-country institutions. He maintains a very active network of scholars and professionals in several AIPS member institutions in the US who serve as focal persons for academic linkages, external research, faculty evaluations, capacity-building, and mentorship of junior faculty from Pakistan. Mr. Akbar also serves on committees and executive boards of various institutions including the Punjab HEC, Institute of Rural Management, Council of Social Sciences Pakistan, Area Studies Center Quaid i Azam University, and others.

Humayoun Awan is a graduate in management science, and had started his career by working with different national level public and private sector organizations. He has been working as project manager with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) since 2008. He has been part of Research & Development (R&D) Division of HEC for over nine years, and been entrusted to lead different programs and projects, which aimed at extending opportunities for development of collaborative research and establishing linkages between Pakistani and foreign universities. He is currently working as team lead for the implementation of the US-Pakistan Knowledge Corridor Project, which provides a window of opportunity for Pakistanis to pursue PhD programs at ranked universities in the United States.

Rukhsana Jabeen started her career in 1988 as a lecturer in Government Girls Degree College Quetta. For the next 30 years, she served in almost all parts of the least developed provincial rural areas such as Noskhi and Sibi, with full passion. She served Balochistan since 2009 in many key capacities in addition to her professorship. She has the honor of being the Vice Chancellor of Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University, Quetta before which she also served the same institute as the chairperson of the Department of Plant Sciences, Dean Faculty of Life Sciences, Registrar and Controller of Examination. Her technical training is in plant biology and technology, and has published articles in more than 50 peer-reviewed journals. In 2009, her books on antibacterial potential of botanicals against disease of rice were published by VDM Germany. She also has the credit of supervising three PhD scholars. Her book on plant pathology was published internationally. Prof. Jabeen has brought radical changes in women's role in education. When she took charge as vice chancellor of SBK in 2003, the university had suffered a tragic bomb blast on one of the university buses. The event had left the whole university in shock and trauma. Prof. Jabeen helped to restore the confidence and integrity of the university which is evident by the increase in the number of students from 1,100 to 8,000 under her tenure. Under her leadership SBK Women University established three sub campuses in rural areas: Noushki, Khuzdar and Pishin. She envisioned around ten mega projects for the university in almost every sector. Under the vision of Prof. Jabeen, SBK Women's University became the campus solution where presently a school from kindergarten to level 05 has started and will gradually become a college. Prof. Jabeen has earned many accolades on national and international levels thanks to her vision, leadership, and academic and administrative abilities.

Nasser Ali Khan started his career as a staff economist at the University of Peshawar in 1984. He was selected director of the then-newly established Institute of Management Sciences (IM Sciences) in Peshawar in 2003, which is now ranked the fourth best business

school in Pakistan. In 2011 he was offered the position of member (Operations and Management) at the Higher Education Commission (HEC). In 2013 he was selected vice chancellor of the University of Haripur by a search committee. In 2017 he was appointed project director of the Pak - Austria Fachhochschule: Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology, Haripur, Pakistan.

Murtaza Noor has been associated with the higher education and development sector for more than twenty years. He contributes regularly on higher education issues for national dailies. Currently, he is associated with Inter University Consortium for Promotion of Social Sciences Pakistan as national coordinator. He is also senior vice president of Academia Industry Linkages Forum.

Abdul Razzaq Sabir was born in 1954 in Kalat. He received his PhD and his master's degree in Pakistan studies, Urdu and Brahui from the University of Balochistan (UoB), Quetta. He earned a diploma/certificate in Dravidian studies from Kerala University, Thiruvandrum, and Arabic language from University of Jordan, Amman. He served for four years in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as Scholar B-21 (with the status of Minister) chair in Urdu and Pakistan studies, and vice chairman of the Department of Asian Languages at the University of Jordan, Amman. At his parent university (UoB), he served as dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, dean of research for Arts Faculties, professor/director of the Balochistan Study Centre, chairman of the Faculty Training Development Centre and chairman of the UFM Committee at the University of Balochistan, Quetta. He also served as acting dean of Humanities and Education and chairman of the Department of Languages at the University of Balochistan. He has published several articles related to the history, culture and languages of Balochistan in reputable national and international journals in the USA, Japan, UK, Sweden, Italy, India, Jordan and Libya. He is also author of ten books, including Balochi Reader that was published in the United States. Dr. Sabir is a member of several national and international organizations and institutional bodies. He has been honored with the civil award of "Tamgha-i-Imtiaz" by the Government of Pakistan on his academic and literary performance. He has produced six PhD and twenty MPhil scholars from different universities in Pakistan. He has remained chief editor and editor of various university journals in Pakistan and abroad. He has presented research papers for international conferences in Japan, Germany, Sweden, China, India and Jordan. He has delivered a series of lectures on history, culture and languages at universities in Jordan, Germany, Japan, Sweden and India. Dr. Sabir can speak, read and write Urdu, English, Balochi, Brahui Pashto and has some understanding of Arabic, Sindhi and Panjabi languages.

Razia Sultana is a renowned historian and vice chancellor of the first women university in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where she is a bona fide inhabitant of the province. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Peshawar with distinction and was awarded with a gold medal on the basis of first class, first position, in history. She joined the Department of History, University of Peshawar in the year 1990 as lecturer and completed her PhD in 1999. From 2002 to 2003 she completed her post doctorate in history as a Fulbright Scholar at the Center on International Cooperation, New York University. Prof. Dr. Sultana, in addition to her academic excellence, has excellent administrative experience at three universities: the University of Peshawar, Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad, and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar. The positions she served include: joint secretary, controller of examination, in-charge

of examination and admission, and as general secretary and vice president of Academic Staff Association. Besides her position as vice chancellor she served as chairperson of the Department of History at Quid-e-Azam University Islamabad from 2009 until 2014. During her academic career at the department, she successfully supervised 27 MPhil and 13 PhD scholars, and continues to do so, despite her demanding position. She has also been the vice-president of Council of Social Sciences (CSS) and focal person of the National Consortium of Social Sciences (HEC). Moreover, she has more than 36 papers published in various journals of national and international repute to her credit. She has contributed as an editor to the Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad and is currently the editor of FWU Journal of Social Sciences, SBBWUP. She has organized and participated in a large number of conferences both nationally and internationally, and has presented valuable papers. On the basis of her diverse experience she holds membership in various academic and professional bodies including the Task Force Committee that is for developing a package for women empowerment that is constituted by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zakat, Ushr Social Welfare, Special Education, Women Empowerment Department. As vice chancellor of SBBWUP, she is responsible for the operation and administration of multi-disciplinary faculties facilitating high quality education, and actively overseeing and monitoring university development. She is also catering the additional charge of Dean of the University. Such multidimensional responsibilities are extended to her due to her resilience and competence.

Junaid Zaidi is the founding rector of the COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT) – now the COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI), which is one of COMSATS's flagship projects in the host country. Zaidi raised CIIT from nowhere to one of the top institutions of the country. It is also ranked among the world and Asian universities. The rise of CIIT is due to its internationalization programs, collaboration in research and human resource development. Presently the CUI has eight campuses in Pakistan, over 3000 faculty members, more than 37,000 students and 97 degree programs. In the year 2017, the CIIT published over 1,500 research articles in impact factor journals. Currently, it has over 1,200 PhD full time faculty members, mostly from abroad. At present, Dr. Zaidi is the executive director of the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South (COMSATS) and second pro-chancellor of the COMSATS University Islamabad. The COMSATS is an international and intergovernmental organization comprising of 27 member-states from across three continents (Asia, Africa and Latin America), which strives to promote South-South cooperation in the fields of science and technology which are most relevant to socio-economic development. A network of 22 International Centers of Excellence in four continents is affiliated with COMSATS. In recognition of his uninterrupted service to society, the Government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan twice conferred the prestigious national awards of Sitara-i-Imtiaz in 2007 and Hilal-i-Imtiaz in 2014. The Lancaster University, United Kingdom conferred on Dr. Zaidi an honorary doctorate degree in 2012. Last year, the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (KaZNU), Kazakhstan also awarded Dr. Zaidi with the 'Al-Farabi Golden Medal' for the recognized contribution to developing cooperation between KazNU and COMSATS Centers of Excellence.

SRI LANKA

Upul Daranagama is the managing director and chief executive officer of Horizon College International and of Horizon College of Business and Technology (Pvt) Ltd (Horizon Campus). Having had his early experience in establishing Oxford College of Business in the city of Colombo, he ventured out to set up Horizon Campus on a much larger scope and scale. His almost inborn entrepreneurial skills and penchant for education have much of its roots in his strong academic background and experience. He completed his tertiary education obtaining a BSc (Acc.FM) from the University of Jayawardenapura, one of the largest state universities in Sri Lanka. He holds the Fellowship in Association of Business Executive of the UK, diploma in human resource management and is a member of the Association of Accounting Technicians of Sri Lanka. For his post-graduate studies, he went to the UK where he obtained an MBA from the University of Leicester. Upon his return to Sri Lanka, he focused on education and sought to establish Oxford College of Business (OCB) in the heart of the city of Colombo in 2002. On the success of Oxford College, he took a larger stride to establish Horizon College International which is an international school following the Edexcel curriculum and the Horizon College of Business & Technology (Pvt) Ltd. Horizon Campus offers diplomas, degrees and postgraduate degrees which are offered in affiliation with partner universities in India, UK, and Australia. Horizon Campus is situated in the green and lush, picturesque environment of Malabe on the outskirts of Colombo to provide students an atmosphere that is conducive for studies. Horizon Campus is a leading private university in Sri Lanka geared to provide an inspiring learning experience to students in a holistic university atmosphere. Annually, more than 500 students enroll to study for Sri Lankan and UK degrees. The triple-accredited status of Horizon Campus – its recognition as a degree-awarding institute by the Ministry of Higher Education in Sri Lanka, as a private higher education service provider by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka, and as a member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities and member of Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQNg) guarantees learners a nationally and internationally recognized qualification. Daranagama also holds the position of the chief executive officer/managing director of the following establishments: Oxford College of Business, Horizon College International, Horizon College of Business & Technology (Pvt) Ltd, Centre for Professional Studies (CFPS Law School) and Kids in Action Preschool & Daycare Center (Pvt) Ltd.

Mohan De Silva is the chairman of the University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka. He was a senior professor and chair in surgery at the Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayawardenepura, consultant surgeon at Colombo South Teaching Hospital, past president of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka and the dean of Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayawardenepura. He was also an honorary consultant surgeon in the UK.

Jayanthi Gunasekara received her BSc from the University of Peradeniya followed by a postgraduate diploma in statistics from the University of Sri Jayawardenepura, and another postgraduate diploma in education and psychological assessment from the University of Colombo. She also received her postgraduate diploma in education from the National Institute of Education as top of her class and winning a gold medal. She won

a World Bank scholarship and received her MA in educational planning and economics from the Institute of Education of the University of London. Finally, she completed her PhD in 2004 at the same university, winning the runner up award for the Best Doctoral Thesis Award from the British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society (BELMAS). Dr. Gunasekara started her career as a mathematics teacher. Later she joined the UNDP-UNESCO Quality Improvement of General Education Project under the Ministry of Education where she contributed to develop a new curriculum for life-skills education. She joined the Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service and subsequently moved on to the National Institute of Education (NIE) as a project officer at the Department of Mathematics with the first batch of academic officers of NIE. Later she was promoted as the chief project officer in the Department of Technical Education. Then she was promoted as the director (planning) and subsequently as assistant director general for the Faculty of Research, Planning and Teacher Education. Finally, she was appointed as the deputy director general of the NIE. After completing 26 years of service at the NIE, she joined the National Education Commission as the vice chairperson in 2013 and finally assumed duties as the director general of the National Institute of Education in March, 2016.

Ranil Dion Guneratne received his BSc in chemistry from the University of Colombo in 1980, and a PhD in organic chemistry from Cornell University in 1987. After three years of post-doctoral research at the University of Iowa, he joined Bennington College in Vermont as a faculty member, in 1990. In 1995, he moved to Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, where he was promoted to associate professor two years later. In 2000, he returned to Sri Lanka, where he joined the Open University of Sri Lanka, and later transferred to the University of Colombo. From 2006 to 2010, he was seconded to serve as the director/CEO of the National Science and Technology Commission, the science policy advisory body to the Government of Sri Lanka. He has also served as a visiting associate professor at Cornell University and Fiji National University, as well as on several national committees in Sri Lanka. He is a fellow of the Institute of Chemistry, Ceylon, and has been the president of the Chemistry Section of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS) and later the editor of SLAAS. He was a member of the Sri Lanka national chess team between 1974 and 1980, and served as the secretary of the Chess Federation of Sri Lanka in 1981, and as its vice-president in 2007. After retiring from the University of Colombo in 2017, he worked as a consultant at the Sri Lanka Institute of Nanotechnology (SLINTEC), and became the provost of the SLINTEC Academy in 2018.

Kamal Rohitha Uduwawala is additional secretary (Non-State Higher Education) in the Ministry of City Planning, Water Resources and Higher Education since 2018. He is in charge of the Division of Non-State Higher Education which is empowered to formulate and implement policies with the private higher education institutions which deliver local degree programs for the students. Most of the students attending these institutions have not considered a placement in a state university in Sri Lanka due to limited placements. Uduwawala is also the chairman of the Standing Committee on Accreditation and Quality Assurance (SCAQA) which is the highest body established to maintain standards of private higher education institutions, degrees and approving the 'Degree Awarding Institutions' (DAI) status for those institutions. The Committee is comprised of 11 members including the chairman. All the committee members are professors in various field of study. Uduwawala is involved in policy making and implementing government

policies on private higher education as the additional secretary of the Ministry and is involved in accreditation and quality assurance as the chairman of the SCAQA. He is also involved in programs implemented through international funding agencies such as the World Bank, one of which seeks to develop private higher education in Sri Lanka, and hence focuses on the academics teaching in private higher education institutes to develop their teaching and research capabilities. In previous years, he has served in the General Treasury, Ministry of Finance and Planning for 19 years in various departments as assistant director, deputy director, and director, before joining this Ministry. He also has served in various institutes as treasury representative, member of the board of directors and attended various programs locally and overseas.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Hanny Alshazly, MEd, is senior regional director at Blackboard Inc (Bb). As senior regional director at Blackboard, Alshazly cultivates opportunities in the higher education, K-12, and corporate markets by highlighting how learning technologies improve the quality of education globally and are the means to meet the dynamic needs of the universal learner. With customer success as his mission, Alshazly is dedicated to ensuring that each one of Bb's customers' goals and vision are met in the long term. Having been a part of the online education field since its early days, Alshazly possesses pragmatic insights into the online teaching and learning industry, which encompass both corporate and academic perspectives. His extensive experience allows him to serve on several educational boards including the Gulf Education Advisory Board. Being a regular speaker at multiple conferences worldwide, Alshazly is also well known for his interactive keynote presentations on education and educational technologies. Over the course of his career, Alshazly's contributions and his dedication to his field have garnered him several awards and recognitions, the most recent being the Distinguished Alumni Award from Athabasca University in Canada, where he received his Master of Education and Advanced Post Graduate Diploma in distance education and technology. During the ceremony, Alshazly was also honored to have been added to the Nova Scotia Legislature for his career achievements. Alshazly also holds a BSc in computer science with a focus on business administration from Dalhousie University in Canada.

Carol Anderson has over 25 years of experience in higher education. She is currently vice president of the New England Commission of Higher Education located in Burlington, Massachusetts where she collaborates with member institutions and external constituencies in New England and internationally on all aspects of the institutional accreditation process, including: becoming accredited; preparing accreditation reports and the self-study; training and education; and the assessment of student success. Dr. Anderson serves on the Regional Committee for the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement – a national initiative to ensure access to high quality online education. She also serves on the national Council of Regional Accreditation Commission's For-Profit Task Force – an initiative to ensure the quality of education at for-profit institutions. Dr. Anderson presents at workshops and educational sessions at universities and conferences in New England and beyond. Internationally, she has presented in Switzerland, China, Ukraine, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Bangladesh, and Lebanon. Dr. Anderson holds a BA and MA in psychology; an EdD in adult education, and a doctorate in law and policy with a focus on regional accreditation and distance education.

Mustafa Aydın is a professor of international relations at Kadir Has University (Istanbul), and the president of International Relations Council of Turkey. Previously, he worked at Ankara University (1994-2005) and Economy and Technology University (2005-2009), and was the rector of Kadir Has University between 2010 and 2018. Professor Aydın was guest researcher and/or lecturer at Michigan (1998), Harvard (2002, Fulbright Fellow), and Athens (2003, Onassis Fellow) universities, as well as at Richardson Institute for Peace Studies (1999, UNESCO Fellow) and the EU Institute for Security Studies (2003). In addition to the Global Relations Forum, he is a member of International Studies Association (ISA), Turkish Atlantic Council, Turkish Political Sciences Association, European Leadership Network, Greek-Turkish Forum, and European Academy of Art and Sciences. Prof. Aydın's areas of interest include international politics, foreign policy analysis, security issues related to Central Asia, Caucasus, the Black Sea and the Middle East, as well as Turkish foreign and security policies. Some of his works are International

Security Today; Understanding Change and Debating Security (with K. Ifantis, 2006); Turkish Foreign and Security Policy (2006); Turkish Foreign Policy; Old Problems, New Parameters (2010); and Non-Traditional Security Threats and Regional Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus (2011).

Richard Boyum is the university partnerships coordinator at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Office of Press and Public Diplomacy. He oversees collaborative partnerships between American universities and institutions in South and Central Asia. Partnerships focus on developing capacity through faculty enrichment, curriculum revision, research, and cross-cultural understanding. He was previously a foreign service officer in the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Academic Programs, specializing in English language teacher education, exchanges, and programming. He served in Washington, Cairo, New Delhi, Sao Paulo, Bangkok, and Santiago. Richard was born in Albert Lea, Minnesota, served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Senegal, and received an MA from Georgetown University in bilingual education.

Colla MacDonald earned the titles of Distinguished University Professor and Professor Emeritus from the University of Ottawa prior to retiring in 2016 and accepting the role as senior researcher at the University of Malta. Dr. MacDonald has demonstrated a cutting-edge vision for education that is recognized around the world. She has conceptualized, designed, and delivered groundbreaking teaching strategies and innovative learning solutions in schools, universities, and healthcare institutions that have impacted learners, teachers, and staff at all levels. Over her 30-year career, Dr. MacDonald's research agenda has adapted to meet the demands of the educational and global climate. For well over a decade, her focus has been on the shifts in learning that have been being driven and affected by massive technological change. She is curious about the conditions under which learning can be made richer, more effective, and more meaningful for learners, particularly adults, in online environments. This has resulted in a life's work of innovative pedagogical approaches. Over the course of her career, Dr. MacDonald has published 100 refereed articles, books, and book chapters, and presented at numerous national and international conferences. She was awarded the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Education Award for Excellence in Research, the eLearn's Outstanding Paper Award, was appointed a senior researcher at the Bruyère Research Institute and was the only member of the Faculty of Education to ever be cross-appointed with the Faculty of Medicine. In 2007, because of her outstanding research record and work in the field of eLearning, Dr. MacDonald received Canadian Foundation for Innovation funding to establish the Faculty of Education's Innovation in eLearning Research Laboratory. Within this laboratory, Dr. MacDonald and her graduate students have collaborated to produce scholarship that has had significant impact at the local, national, and international levels. For example, their eLearning frameworks have been used to guide the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of learning programs in several countries across four continents both in the university setting and with global organizations such as the World Health Organization, the National Board of Medical Examiners in the United States, Doctors Without Borders, and the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa to name just a few. In collaboration with the School of Nursing, Dr. MacDonald created a bilingual toolkit of assessment instruments to assess healthcare education, which were validated with over 1,000 learners in three countries and are currently being used as quality standards to assess healthcare

workers in various programs in Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, across Canada and the United States. Dr. MacDonald led the development and evaluation of award-winning ePhysicianHealth.com/ eSantedesMedecine.com, a program comprising 14 bilingual online modules on physician wellness topics. ePhysicianHealth.com is a highly regarded learning platform that is used by medical schools, hospitals, healthcare organizations, and national/international medical associations and policy think tanks. The impact of this research is felt internationally with the program being used by over 26,000 individuals in more than 130 countries. Dr. MacDonald is a leader in her field and has been invited onto the global stage. She designed workshops with the World Health Organization in Africa, Europe, and North America. Dr. MacDonald's high standards of teaching are reflected in the awards she has received for her eLearning courses and modules, including the WebCT Exemplary Course Award, the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education Awards of Excellence, Excellence and Innovation in Instructional Design, and the International E-Learning Award for Business/Professional E-Learning awarded by the International E-Learning Association. Dr. MacDonald has successfully supervised two post-doctoral fellows, 15 doctoral students, four master's students, and three students doing interim reports, in addition to being on over 30 thesis committees.

Arno Meerman is a co-founder and a CEO of the University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN). In his role, Meerman oversees UIIN's daily activities. To foster innovation and entrepreneurship, he also leads several of UIIN initiatives, including UIIN events, Good Practice Case Studies as well as national and EU projects. He has been a leading organizer of more than ten major events, including conferences with more than 300 participants. Meerman is currently involved in a project (PUSH) which looks at hybrid value creation (open innovation) in a regional context. He also manages UIIN's involvement in the SHIP project (Erasmus+Knowledge Alliance) in which four regional alliances are built to stimulate open innovation and collaboration. Meerman was a project manager and a researcher in several European and national research projects, including the largest European study completed in the area of university-business cooperation, commissioned by the European Commission.

Concepcion V. Pijano is the chair of the Advisory Council for Higher Education Accreditation International Quality Group (CIQG) which addresses higher education quality assurance worldwide. She served as president of the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) from 2007–2010. APQN is the regional network of quality assurance agencies in the Asia-Pacific Region. Ms. Pijano has shared her experiences and expertise in accreditation with various institutions, both local and international. She has served as a consultant for accreditation and quality assurance to a number of countries in the Asia-Pacific region and Africa. For the past seven years, she has been involved in the ASEAN-QA Project, a joint initiative carried out by seven international partners which aims at strengthening quality assurance within the region. Currently, she is a consultant for UNICEF in Timor-Leste, assisting the Ministry of Education in establishing the licensing and accreditation system for the country. She is also involved in the European Union project on Strengthening Higher Education in the ASEAN Region (EU-SHARE). She has authored several manuals and tools for accreditation, conducted research and capacity building workshops, advised governments on quality assurance issues and presented papers in regional and international conferences. She was Executive Director of the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities until April 2018. She earned her master's degree in Public Administration at Pace University in New York, USA.

Gard Titlestad is the director of Nordic Insight. Today, Titlestad works as consultant for his company Nordic Insight, for NordForsk and the Nordic Research Collaboration. He also works as an expert (governing board member) for the UNESCO Institute for IT in Education and a few international projects. He retired in the summer of 2018 from the International Council for Open and Distance Education, ICDE, where he led the ICDE operations and the Permanent Secretariat. At ICDE he worked in close partnership with UNESCO for the new sustainable development goals, in particular number four. Collaboration between institutions, associations, companies and individuals was a key priority for him, on a regional, global and north-south-south basis. He led the ICDE participation in the Teachers Task Force for Education 2030, the Global Alliance for Literacy and the UNESCO led initiative for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. Gard joined ICDE in 2011 after serving at the Nordic Council of Ministers, NCM, in Copenhagen, Denmark, as head for the Department of Knowledge and Welfare. He managed the secretariat for several configurations of ministers including the ministers for education, research and IT, the ministers for health and social affairs, the ministers for labour affairs, for a shorter period the ministers for enterprise and the ministers for finance. Before joining the NCM, Gard served as Research and IT Counsellor for Norway, and as member of the executive team for the Norwegian delegation to the European Union. Prior to this, he was a senior official in the European Commission in Brussels, Directorate General Information Society. In Norway he worked for the Norwegian Government in research and development agencies. Gard is a member of the Advisory Board of the African Virtual University (AVU) online Journal of Research in Open, Distance and e-Learning (JRODeL), the editorial board of the American Journal of Distance Education and he was the publisher of the open access journal Open Praxis.

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