

2014-15

Witness to Education in Afghanistan and Throughout the World

Pulse Curriculum

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School of Leadership,
Afghanistan (SOLA)



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Table of Contents

Witness to Education in Afghanistan and Throughout the World: Program Overview	2
LEARN: History of Education in Afghanistan	
Educator Guide.....	3
Student Worksheet	4
ACT: Education as a Spark for Change.....	
Educator Guide.....	5
Student Worksheet	6
Guest Speaker Overview	8
Hangout on Air Outline	9
REFLECT and Connect.....	10-11
Additional Teaching Resources	12-13

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Witness to Education in Afghanistan and Throughout the World: Program Overview

When the international media portrays Afghanistan, it is often images of war, oppression, and barriers to education. Rarely do people outside the country get to learn about the complex successes, challenges, and history of the education system within Afghanistan. We often hear about international efforts to bring education to Afghanistan, but how often do we ask what we can learn from Afghanistan's story and apply it to other countries and communities?

In the 1960s and 1970s, Afghanistan's government gave high priority to formal, vocational, and higher education, but this suffered during decades of war.¹ In 2001, at the end of Taliban control, only 800,000 children – all boys – were attending formal school in Afghanistan. Since then, Afghanistan has again made tremendous gains in education, with 8.2 million children in school, 40% of them girls.² However, 4.2 million are still out of school, particularly in rural areas.³ Education has the power to transform the lives of Afghan youth, their families, and their country – but how does this transformation happen?

The United Nations considers education to be a fundamental human right, a catalyst that can “increase [people's] chances of getting jobs, staying healthy and participating fully in society...it boosts their children's chances of leading healthy lives.”⁴ However, in Afghanistan and many countries, it is difficult to receive quality education; attending school itself is not a guarantee.

In this program, high school students explore education as a tool to transform communities. In a live broadcast (Hangout on Air), students learn from guest speaker Mellissa Fung, a journalist and former correspondent in Afghanistan. Students focus on the driving question: ***How can we, as youth, utilize education to promote positive change within our communities?***

Program Overview - Witness to Education in Afghanistan and Throughout the World			
	Activity	Estimated Time	Checklist(✓)
LEARN	Understanding Education In Afghanistan	50 minutes	
ACT	Education as a Spark for Change ✓ <i>Post your log, flame, and catalyst on G+</i>	50 minutes	
	Hangout on Air ✓ <i>Prepare outline with class</i>	30 minutes prep 60 minute Hangout	
REFLECT	Reflect & Connect	15 minutes	

Learning Objectives

This curriculum and program will:

- Introduce students to the past and present situation of education within Afghanistan;
- Foster discussion about education's impact on individuals, communities, and countries.
- Encourage students to take action to improve education within their own community.

¹ Samady, R. Saif. "Education and Afghanistan Society in the Twentieth Century." *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. (Paris: 2001), 10-12. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001246/124627e.pdf>.

² Miller, Jim. "News from Afghanistan: Higher Education Needs the Support of International Partners." *Institution of International Education*. (March 11, 2013). <http://www.iie.org/Blog/2013/March/News-from-Afghanistan>.

³ Save the Children. "Afghanistan: Education." accessed November 1 2014. <http://afghanistan.savethechildren.net/what-we-do/education>.

⁴ "Education Transforms Lives." *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. (Paris, 2013), 3. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002231/223115E.pdf>.

Using the Curriculum

This guide will help educators implement this specific Pulse program in the classroom. Educator Guide pages are marked by a **green bar along the border** of the page. There are several pages included for your students to complete. **Print out and provide to your students p. 2, 5, 7-9, 11.**

The program follows this **LEARN-ACT-REFLECT** Structure:

LEARN

This is intended to give students background information on the program's topic, via a hands-on, engaging activity.

ACT

This is intended to put the knowledge and skills gained in the LEARN activity into action. It encourages students to work together to identify a problem in their community related to the program topic, and begin to make the change happen.

REFLECT

After the broadcast, debrief and reflect with your class, and continue the conversations with your partners through the Google+ event page.

Google Hangout on Air

This program culminates in a live broadcast event. Using the Google Hangout on Air platform, multiple sites are connected to engage in a virtual town-hall including:

On-Air Sites (Connect using audio and video)


- *Global Nomads Group facilitator*
- *Guest speaker:* chosen based on their expertise or experience with program topic
- *Ambassador Schools:* 3-4 schools selected through the GNG application process, whose students are active in the live dialogue

Online Audience (Participates via a chat-box on the Google Event Page and curriculum)

- *Participant Schools:* an unlimited number of schools around the world who may use activities from curriculum, view the broadcast, and chat in questions during the event

A recording will be available online after the event: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdeqDoSVI-w>.

Google+ Event Page⁵

Get the conversation started on the **Google+ Event Page**:  <https://plus.google.com/events/c46m3un6a1g2uumk5m84ojr99oo>. This is a space for all Pulse participants to get to know each other, exchange curriculum activities, and share ideas and questions before and after your Pulse session. This is also where you can watch the live broadcast!

⁵ <https://plus.google.com/events/c46m3un6a1g2uumk5m84ojr99oo>

LEARN: The History of Education in Afghanistan

TIME:	Approximately 50 minutes
MATERIALS:	Internet/Computer access for class, butcher paper or board for timeline (or digital timeline ⁶), “Understand Education in Afghanistan” student worksheet for class (p. 6)
OVERVIEW:	This activity will help students acquire background knowledge on the history of education in Afghanistan, through review and analysis of three time periods.

LESSON PLAN ACTIVITIES:

1. Knowledge Assessment (5 minutes)

Display or read aloud the following three statements about Afghanistan to the class.

- In 2001, at the end of the Taliban’s control of Afghanistan, only 800,000 children – all boys – were attending formal school in Afghanistan. In 2012, 8.2 million children were in school, 40% of them girls.²
- The adult female literacy rate in Afghanistan is 13%.⁷ The overall adult literacy rate is 39%.⁸
- Afghanistan has approximately 180,000 teachers. 52% meet the required standards.⁸
- 76% of Afghans live in rural areas.²

Divide students into small groups/pairs to brainstorm the positive and negative impacts of these statistics on a community. Guiding questions include:

- Are these statistics surprising to you? Why or why not?
- How does living in a rural area impact access to resources (education, healthcare, etc.)?
- Is education always a good thing? Why or why not?

2. Research: Analyzing Time Periods of Afghan Education History (25 minutes)

Divide the class evenly into groups and assign each one of the three time periods of Afghan history. The groups will explore education in these time periods, through the [resources below](#) and the [Timeline Activity](#) on p.6. Remind students to write down important dates, events, and themes while looking at their resources – using the guide on the worksheet! *Additional resources in the Appendix.*

3. Class Timeline: Mapping Afghan Education History (15 minutes)

As a class, map each era’s major events and impact on a group timeline – on a board/paper in front of the class, or online (http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/timeline_2/). First, have each group add their information to the timeline (2-3 dates and a summary of impact). Then, encourage students to walk around and view the other two time periods, or have each group present their findings.

4. Reflect (5 minutes)

As a class, reflect on the statements from part 1 and timeline.

- How has the situation of education in Afghanistan changed in the last 50 years?
- Do you see any parallels with your own community?
- How has your understanding of Afghanistan, specifically education, changed throughout this activity?

Deepen the Discussion

Afghanistan has a number of “**Community Schools**,” often in villages at a house, community center, or mosque. The teachers are local, and the community or aid organizations provide materials or training. Read more at www.nytimes.com/2010/09/17/opinion/17burde.html and discuss:

- What are community schools?
- How can they be effective in different communities? Is there a parallel system in your country?

⁶ http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/timeline_2/

⁷ *Afghanistan Country Programme: Fast Facts 2011*. (Kabul, Afghanistan: United Nations Child’s Fund, 2011).

⁸ BBC News, “Afghanistan: Before and After the Taliban.” accessed November 1 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-26747712>.

LEARN: History of Education in Afghanistan

Student Worksheet

As a first step, let's explore education in different eras of Afghan history, and see how it has changed. Review the resources for your assigned time period, and answer the questions below.


20 th Century prior to 1996	A World-Class Education? (Asia Society) Video on Afghanistan's educational system in the early 20 th century, focusing on 1929	http://afghanistan.asiasociety.org/timeline/68/CE/1929
	What History Can Teach Us About Contemporary Afghanistan? (Education About Asia) <i>*Focus on pg 10-13.</i> A former Peace Corps member's memories of Afghanistan in 1965-1974.	http://world.unomaha.edu/cas/img/Gouttierre_EAA-Fall2012.pdf
1996- 2001	The Taliban in Afghanistan – <i>Council on Foreign Relations</i> Overview of the Taliban's rise to power, rule, and opposition	http://www.cfr.org/afghanistan/taliban-afghanistan/p10551
	Dare to Educate Afghan Girls (TED Talks) <i>*start at 5:00</i> Shabana Basij-Rasikh speaks about growing up under the Taliban and the importance of education	https://www.ted.com/talks/shabana_basij_rasikh_dare_to_educate_afghan_girls
Today (2001-present)	Women's Rights in the Taliban & Post-Taliban Era (PBS) <i>*Read the "Post Taliban Era" sections on Education, Employment, and Health</i> A comparison of women's education, employment, and health access in 1996-2001	http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/a-woman-among-warlords/womens-rights-in-the-taliban-and-post-taliban-eras/66/
	Education and Empowerment in Afghanistan: Noorjahan Akbar (TEDx Talk) <i>*watch 6:46 until 11:00</i> Afghan women's rights activist Noorjahan Akbar shares her personal story and the impact that education can have around the world and in Afghanistan	http://www.wluml.org/media/noorjahan-akbar-tedxlafayettecollege-education-and-empowerment-afghanistan

List 2-3 key events that contributed to education within Afghanistan during your time period:

Event	Year	What was the Impact of this event on the situation of education in Afghanistan?
1.		
2.		
3.		

What is the biggest challenge of education in your time period? What is the biggest success?

ACT: Education as a Spark for Change

TIME:	Approximately 50 minutes
MATERIALS:	Butcher paper or poster board for class (or digital), “Education as a Spark” Student Worksheet (p. 7)
OVERVIEW:	Students will examine education as a catalyst to transform communities, positively and negatively. They will use the “Spark” activity as an analytical tool to develop a deeper understanding of education in Afghanistan and their own communities.
	The class posts their community log, flame, and action on the Google+ Event Page ⁹ !

LESSON PLAN INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Brainstorm: Catalyst (5 minutes)

Ask students: What is a catalyst? Brainstorm as a group, then share the definition. Then, discuss as a class:

- How can education be a catalyst? How can it impact an individual and community positively (gender equity, improved health, etc.) or negatively (loss of local tradition, migration, etc.)?
- How do “education” and “quality education” differ?
- Is education a universal human right? Why or why not?

Catalyst: A person, thing, or event that causes or **sparks** change or action

Quality education can “Enable people to develop their attributes and skills to achieve their potential as a human being and members of society.” (Unite for Quality Education Campaign)

2. Spark Introduction and Practice (20 minutes)

“Spark” is an analytical tool that helps develop a deeper understanding of social issues, like education in Afghanistan and in students’ communities. As a class, review the Spark structure (p. 7):

- **Context:** Think of education as a catalyst for change (positive or negative). This fire represents how education can impact a particular aspect of a community.
- **Logs:** These represent the area that education can/does impact within the community.
 - **Ex:** *Health, economics, tolerance, global awareness, gender equality, environment*
- **Flames:** These are the positive and negative impacts of education on this area.
 - **Ex:** *If logs are family economics, flames could be less spending power because of school fees (negative), increased wages of children later in life (positive), etc.*

Practice: Practice this activity, using the example of education in Afghanistan. Divide students into groups and assign each a different “log.” Instruct each group to use the worksheet (p. 7) to fill in their “flames,” brainstorming 3-4 positive and negative ways that education can impact their topic.

As a class, have each group briefly present their 3-4 “flames.” Discuss as a group:

- Were the flames positive or negative? How do we ensure that education has a positive impact?
- How did this activity enhance your understanding of quality education and its impact?

3. ACT: Education as a Spark for Change in Your Community (20 minutes)

Redirect the class to focus on their lives. What problems do you see in your community? How might education impact that issue? Together, pick one “log” and map the flames (on paper or digitally).

- What are the ways that education can impact [health, economics, etc.] in our community?
- *As a class, identify one flame to focus on, and brainstorm what students could do to accelerate or fix that impact: What would be your first step to making this change occur? Who would you need to partner with in your community?*

4. Post your community log, flame, and “what you can do” on the Google+ Event Page⁹.



⁹ <https://plus.google.com/events/c46m3un6a1g2uumk5m84ojr99oo>

ACT: Education as a Spark for Change

Student Worksheet

Education can be a catalyst (or spark) for change – positive or negative. In this activity, we will use the analogy of a fire to explore how education can impact a particular aspect of a community or life.

There are two main parts to a fire: the logs and the flames.

- **Logs:** These represent the area that education can/does impact within the community.
Ex: Health, economics, tolerance, global awareness, gender equality, environment, etc. You can think of other areas as well!
- **Flames:** These are the positive and negative impacts of education on this area.
Ex: If logs are family economics, flames could be less spending power because of school fees (negative), increased wages of children later in life (positive), etc.

Spark Practice: Education in Afghanistan

Logs: What area(s) of life does education impact within Afghanistan?

Flames: What are the impacts of education on this area? (List 3-4 positive AND negative!)



Education as a Spark in YOUR Community

Now, let's take what we've learned and apply it to our own communities and lives. What problems do you see in your community? How might education impact that issue?



Logs: What problems or areas of life does education impact in your community (school, town, country)?

Flames: What are the impacts of _____ in our community?

As a class, pick one flame to focus on. *This should be something that you feel you can take action to change or help the flame.* What would be your first step to making this change occur? Who would you need to partner with in your community?

Post your community log, flame, and "what you can do" on the Google+ Event Page.¹⁰



¹⁰ <https://plus.google.com/events/c46m3un6a1g2uumk5m84ojr99oo>

Guest Speaker: Mellissa Fung*Witness to Education in Afghanistan and Throughout the World***Biography:**

Award-winning journalist Mellissa Fung has been with CBC Television since 2000. As a national correspondent, she has been on the frontlines of a wide range of stories on both Canadian and world affairs, including the Beijing Olympics and the war and education in Afghanistan, as well as in-depth documentaries on topics as diverse as asbestos mining and post-traumatic stress in soldiers returning from war. Her bestselling book, [*Under an Afghan Sky*](#), chronicles her experience as a hostage after she was kidnapped by insurgents in Afghanistan in 2008. Fung divides her time between Toronto and Washington, DC.

**Want to learn more?**

Read more about Mellissa, education in Afghanistan, and her other reporting with the Pulitzer Center at: <http://pulitzercenter.org/projects/afghanistan-kabul-canadian-women-for-women-human-rights-education-politics-security-NATO-CW4WA>

Preparing for the Hangout on Air!


With your class, prepare two questions for the guest speaker (or peers in the broadcast), about education in Afghanistan and its role in societies around the world.

Questions for Guest Speaker:
1.
2.

*****Don't forget to review the Hangout on Air outline, to prepare for the broadcast!***

Hangout on Air Outline:

Witness to Education in Afghanistan and Throughout the World

DATE/TIME:	December 10, 2014 at 8-9 am Eastern Time (US) / 5:30-6:30 pm Afghan Time
MATERIALS:	Google Hangout on Air Outline (p. 9), prepared with comments and questions
OVERVIEW:	Get ready for your Pulse session with these three steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete the LEARN and ACT activities with your class 2. Review the outline and guest speaker bio and prepare comments and questions.
	Post follow-up questions and comments to the Google+ Event Page!

1. Introduction and Greetings (7 minutes)

GNG facilitator welcomes all participating students to the *Witness to Education in Afghanistan and Throughout the World* Pulse Program. All Ambassador Schools – those participating live via video – will introduce themselves.

Ambassador Schools: Have one student introduce him/herself and your group.	
➤	Name:
➤	School Name and Location:
➤	One interesting thing you learned about education in Afghanistan through the curriculum:

2. LEARN: Guest Speaker (10 minutes)

GNG facilitator provides a brief introduction to Mellissa Fung, who shares an overview of her work and experience with education in Afghanistan as a reporter and advocate.

3. Peer Discussion (15 minutes)

The GNG facilitator guides a discussion between the guest speaker and Ambassador Schools about the situation of education in Afghanistan and education's role as a catalyst for change around the world. The group will answer the guiding question: *How can we, as youth, utilize education to promote positive change within our communities?*

Participant Schools (live online audience) can ask questions and share ideas in the chat box on the Google Hangout on Air [Event Page](#).

Questions for Guest Speaker:	
1.	
2.	

4. Taking Action (10 minutes)

Ambassador Schools discuss the situation of education in their communities, and how they can use education to positively impact their communities (health, economics, environment, etc.)

5. Conclusion (3 minutes)

Thanks to all for participating! Don't forget to stay involved with Global Nomads Group online and to continue your involvement in Pulse and other programs.

Reflect and Connect

TIME:	15 minutes post-Google Hangout on Air
MATERIALS:	Google+ Event Page ; Educator IVC Feedback Form (http://goo.gl/forms/NZsdElyA4I)
OVERVIEW:	Share reflections online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambassador School Educators fill out IVC Feedback Form; Students post to the <i>Pulse</i> Google+ Event Page.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Connect: Students and Educators (15 minutes)

Students: Direct students to the student reflection worksheet and encourage them to share at least one final reflection or a question, on behalf of their class with the Google+ Event page: <https://plus.google.com/events/c46m3un6a1g2uumk5m84ojr99oo>.



Ask students to share one of their reflections on the Google+ Event Page.

Ambassador School Educators:

Fill out the Pulse Feedback form at <http://goo.gl/forms/NZsdElyA4I>.

REFLECT

Reflect and Connect

Reflect on the questions below, then go to [Google+ Event Page](#)¹¹ and post your thoughts!

What was the most interesting or surprising thing you learned about education in Afghanistan?
How did it make you see this issue differently?

What questions do you still have for your peers? The guest speaker?

What did you learn about your own community? How can you use education as a tool to promote positive change in your school or community?

Connect on Google+



Pick at least one reflection or question from your class to share in a Google+ Event Page post. Post and see what your peers are saying!

¹¹ <https://plus.google.com/events/c46m3un6a1g2uumk5m84ojr99oo>

Additional Teaching Resources

Below are additional resources for students and educators with more information about education in Afghanistan and its role in societies throughout the world, and an activity on education equity.

Education in Afghanistan:

- A learning resource about Afghanistan's geography, people and culture, and history: http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/content/kids/en_US/explore/countries/afghanistan/
- A BBC article that discusses a new Afghan history curriculum that intends to rewrite the past: www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-18579315.
- PBS articles and educational media pieces about Afghanistan and its education system: http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/search/?q=afghanistan&selected_facets.

Education's Role in Societies Worldwide:

- A UNESCO article that looks at how education can impact multiple areas within society: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002231/223115E.pdf>.

"Right to Education" Activity (10 minutes)

This activity introduces students to the relationship between education, economics, health, and other quality of life measures. Prepare the "Level of Education" cards (p. 13) to distribute to the class.

1. **Prep:** As students arrive, give each a "Level of Education" card: College Graduate, High School Graduate, Two Years High School, or Primary School Graduate.
2. **Context:** Explain that income is often directly related to level of education. In this activity, students will manage one month's salary, deciding how to use it to pay for housing, food, utilities, healthcare, and education and keeping track of what they spend. Students can choose between options for each area, remembering their overall budget and trying to save for future costs. ***For this activity, everyone has a family with one child to provide for.*
3. **Monthly Costs:** Read students the following statements to the class and have them choose which they will buy for each area, subtracting the cost from their salary:
 - Housing: Pay \$500 to rent a house, \$300 to rent a small apartment, or \$100 to contribute to rent at your parents' home.
 - Food: Pay \$200 monthly for high-quality food/groceries and several restaurant visits, \$100 for food/groceries and one restaurant visit, or \$50 on low-quality food/groceries.
 - Utilities: Spend \$200 a month for heating and basic utilities (water, electricity, etc.), or \$100 for all utilities without heat. If you want Internet at your home, pay an extra \$100.
 - Medical Expenses: Your child became very ill. Everyone must pay \$100 for medical expenses, except the College Graduate who were able to take their child for yearly doctor's visits and only have to pay \$50 because it's not as serious.
 - Education: You want to send your child to school. Do you spend \$50 on public schooling or \$200 on a private institution?
4. **Class Debrief:** Have students share their savings, and reflect as a class:
 - Did you have enough money to cover basic expenses for your family? Could you save?
 - What sacrifices did you have to make when deciding what to buy? How did you decide?
 - We've looked at education's impact on economics. What other areas of a family's quality of life does it impact?

"A Right To Education" Activity Cards

<p>College Graduate</p> <p>You were able to graduate from high school and college, thanks to the support of your family and teachers that let you study instead of work.</p> <p>You earn a monthly salary of \$2000.</p>	<p>High School Graduate</p> <p>You were able to attend all four years of high school. However, you couldn't attend college because you needed to work in your family's business to help support your other siblings.</p> <p>You earn a monthly salary of 1200\$.</p>
<p>Two Years High School</p> <p>You were able to attend two years of high school, but you had to drop out because your family needed additional income.</p> <p>You earn a monthly salary of \$900.</p>	<p>Primary School Graduate</p> <p>You completed primary school, but your family lives in a rural area far from the nearest high school, so you were not able to continue your education.</p> <p>You earn a monthly salary of \$350.</p>