

Afghanistan: For Educators

Harris 2018



Basic Information

Located in: Asia (Middle East)

Capital City: Kabul (Pronounced Cobble)

Geography: Mountainous, areas of desert & fertile land

Climate: dry; hot summers & cold winters

Religion: Islam (majority Sunni, minority Shia)

Major Celebrations: Eid Al-Fitr, Eid-Al Adha, Ramadan, & Nowruz (Persian New Year)

Major Languages: Pashto & Dari (also referred to as Farsi)

Major Ethnic Groups in USA: Pashtun (Pashto), Tajiks (Dari), and Hazara (Hazaragi)

Religion

Muslim refers to a person that practices the religion of Islam.

Muslims pray 5 times a day and some women wear a hijab, or

headscarf. Muslims do not eat pork.

Holidays (Eid Al-Adha and Eid Al-Fitr) are guided by the lunar calendar. Eid Al-Fitr celebrates the end of Ramadan. Ramadan is a time of fasting during the day.

Food

Kabuli Palow - seasoned rice with carrots and raisins

Chicken, beef, goat, sheep

Yogurt

Chips (fries)

Potatoes, beans

Dates, raisins, nuts

Green or black tea

Naan bread

Gender Roles

Gender roles depend on individual families, education, and socioeconomic level - yet, traditional gender roles still exist. Girls are less valued and help with housework. Boys have higher value and more freedom.

Cultural Values

- Family members stay close together
- and do most everything together,
- including extended family. Family
- obligations come first before all else.
- Hospitality is key to interactions with
- others. Upholding honor,
- especially related to care & protection
- of women and family, is important.

History Highlights

Long ago, Afghanistan was under the control of the Persian empire. It became its own nation in 1747. The British attempted to gain control three times (all failed attempts), with, two Anglo-Afghan wars. In 1964 a constitutional monarchy was established.

From 1979-1989 the country was controlled by the Soviets, under a communist regime. The Mujaheddin took power from the Soviets in 1992, and established an Islamic state. In 1994 the Taliban rose to power. From 2001 -2018 U.S. troops have occupied Afghanistan in the War on Terror.

Dress

Many wear western dress.

Men: Peraan wa tunban
Women: May wear hijab

No One

Left Behind

Organization that assists Afghans who worked with U.S. forces, who are now under threat - they come with Special Immigrant Visas (SIV)

Education

- Parents may seem uninvolved or unconcerned, but trusting teachers to make decisions about education is a cultural norm.
- Classrooms are underfunded, without adequate supplies, and there is a lack of qualified teachers.
- School starts at age 7, 12 grades in school.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten are not compulsory; 9 years of compulsory education.
- Private school are better quality but not free, most cannot afford it
- English classes offered in high school; Middle and upper class families sometimes pay for English tutors.
- Many students stop attending school for safety reasons.
- Students arriving from Afghanistan may have limited or interrupted formal education, but don't make assumptions - each family's experience is different.