

# The University of The Future's Role in Providing Humanized and Entrepreneurship Education for Women in Afghanistan

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**Abstract:** Despite education is considered as a basic human right, it is been a challenge for the majority of Afghan people especially women. In Afghanistan, women are experiencing various obstacles due to the lack of educational society. They remain poor and deprived of education. Even though during the past couple of decades, there is an increase in initiatives addressing poverty and women education, the majority still suffer. Only 37 percent of women have gained an education. This is due to parents and maybe the government paid less attention to women's education. This deprivation of women from education caused in the decrease of their role in Governmental affairs and society development. Because of this, they become a burden on their parents and husbands to survive. The aim of this paper is to investigate the main barriers to women education. This paper uses the design and system thinking methodology to understand the main problems and propose a business model of University of the Future (UotF) for a Malaysian university in providing humanizing education to the women in Afghanistan. The contribution of this paper is a conceptual and validated business model in BMC and VPC format. The UotF business model for the Malaysian university proposed in this paper will help Afghan women to gain the basic knowledge, skills and human values in contributing to the wellbeing and development of Afghan society.

**Keywords:** Humanized Education, Entrepreneurship, Afghan women, BMC, VPC, wellbeing and development, University of the future.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Well knowingly, education plays an essential role in the growth of a society. Quality education is considered as one of the basic needs of human beings. According to ZOLFAGHARI, A. (2015), the relationship between education and society development is absolute. Undoubtedly, a society's economic, political and cultural development will be very difficult without having educated people. Education is the mean for contributing to the development and formation of knowledge, skill, belief, wisdom and thoughts. It can be surly said that education is a solution to eradicate underdevelopment in today's industrialized world. In recent decades, developed countries and some developing nations have taken large steps towards development and as a result, great progressions have been made; but still, there is a long way to go.

Islam firmly encourages its follower to seek education. This can be very well understood from the very first verse of the Holy Qur'an revealed is about reading and getting education. There are many universities in the world that are educating the Ummah based on Islamic values ("List of Islamic Universities & Colleges," n.d.). These universities can play an essential role in providing humanizing education that enhances the wellbeing of Afghan women.

According to (Wilson, 2018), in the past couple of decades, there is an impressive increase in the number of Afghan citizens with 66 percent of male but only 37 percent of female education. While maybe the quality of education is not guaranteed due to teachers often find it hard to provide quality education with a lack of supplies and resources, low salaries and being understaffed. Based on the UNICEF recent report, 3.7 million school-age children are out of school whereas 60% of them are girls. The lack of female teachers, especially in rural areas could be one of the reasons for the

women and girl's low enrolment. Less than 20 percent of all teachers are female in half of the Afghan provinces. Gender inequality in terms of education is also an issue in Afghanistan. In some areas of Afghanistan, families consider the education of boys more important than girls' education. Girls who got married are often urged to discontinue their education where nearly one-third of girls are married before the age of 18 (Rahmani, & Dahlan, 2019)

## 2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite education is every mankind basic right, in certain countries it is difficult to get access. As mentioned in the introduction, education plays a vital role in resolving and overcoming the daily issues and problems. In today's world, a society that lacking educated people goes through a high rate of unemployment which then cause poverty. Amongst the biggest challenges that women in Afghanistan are facing include lack of quality education or illiteracy with 41% illiterate, 27% unemployed, 19% domestically violent, 13% forced to marriage, 12% lack of basic rights as well as 12% poverty (Azeem, 2018).

Illiteracy is the core factor to poverty, unemployment, and social illness among people especially Afghan women. According to a survey that was conducted by Asia foundation among Afghan women in 2016-17 founded out that their most significant challenge is lack of education or illiteracy (40.9%). Afghanistan has one of the most illiteracy rates around the globe, currently estimated at about 31% of the population – above 15 years of age. The UNDP estimates female literacy at about 31.7% of adults. UNICEF reports that 3.7 million school-age children are out of school—60% of them girls. According to the 2016–17 Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey, the national unemployment level currently stands at about 24%, and more than 54.5% of the population lives below the poverty line on less than a dollar a day (Azeem, 2018).

Women are only consuming in a family. They are a burden on their husbands and parents. There are various factors that cause in education difficulties for Afghan women. Some of these major obstacles women face are poverty, insecurity, early marriage, norms marriage, harassments, family encouragement and lack of support, lack of qualified female staffs, children education priority, distance from home to school, being the wrong 'gender and so on. It is not possible thinking of world welfare except improving the women's conditions. It is impossible for a bird to fly on only one wing. Thus, it is critical for the Afghan government to focus on humanizing and entrepreneurship education for women so as to create a harmonious society and sustainable development. (Rahmani et al., 2019)

## 3. OBJECTIVES

Certainly, education is essential in the growth of a society. However, there are many societies which are deprived of access to education and learnings. Afghanistan is a country in which people are having a hard time to gain education especially women. The main objective of this paper is to investigate the contribution and role of IIUM to overcome the problem of women education debridement. This paper proposes a new business model for the business case and business model for IIUM with key activities and programs to help women in enhancing their knowledge, abilities, skills, and values towards developing a harmonious and sustainable society.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

This paper will use the design and system thinking methodology in this paper. This includes literature review, interviewing with a Malaysian university, M-University, and environmental mapping tools for probing the key problems, formulating and validating the options and finding possible humanizing education solutions for the research population, which are the Afghan women. The business model canvas and value proposition canvas will be used. The focus in this paper will be mostly on understanding and formulating various possible solutions which enhanced the wellbeing of Afghan women. In addition, systems thinking methodology is a highly structured procedure, which involves a series of steps requiring much attention. (Shaked & Schechter, 2017). So, this methodology deals with often ill-structured and complex situations which display disagreement on what sides are most relevant and important in order to address them.

## 5. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Institutes of higher learnings*

Higher education contains all post-secondary education, research guidance and training. It comprises all activities that a country deems to be higher education. Nowadays, contributing to society have been demanded increasingly of institutes

of higher learnings. Which means that the institutes of higher learnings are required to have activities ensuring accumulated education is delivered back to society. Even though higher education has been based on Western university model, the way its developed deeply rooted in the societies of which it is a part. After World War 2, higher education expanded worldwide remarkably. One of the roles of higher education is to develop human resources that are necessary for social development and economic growth. Besides that, institutes of higher learnings play a vital role in creating and diffusion of knowledge, developing a healthy civil society and means for achieving self-realization. (JICA, 2005)

### *Women education in Afghanistan*

The last couple of decades, the on-going wars have affected Afghan people in many areas and deprived them of having the basic human rights such as food, safety, education and so forth. Women are mostly the victims of this deprivation. Majority of Afghan women are kept away from earning an education. These are due to many reasons including poverty and safety. Furthermore, one of the factors regarding the lack of education for girls is the gender inequality in terms of education. According to (Rahmani & Dahlan, 2019), The issues of education in Afghanistan is related to gender. In cities, the girls' education has been improved, but it has been limited in rural areas. The number of girls going to school was high at the beginning of the current administration. The continues war since then has affected the opportunities for women's education, training and economic growth.

While many Western-based governments, institutions, and industries congratulate themselves on how effectively they have contributed to post-war reconstruction in Afghanistan, and in particular to women's literacy and education, the realities on the ground have been far from promising. Government claims in the form of White House press releases have been grandiose concerning the progress made in democratizing and rebuilding Afghanistan. However, their descriptions have been far from the reality. Furthermore, there are literally hundreds of NGOs and development projects, directly and indirectly, related to education (including infrastructure development, without which the education system cannot function). Determining a total number is a task in itself, as more are proliferating. Many are functioning simply as image promoters—that is, are more concerned with their own image than with the altruistic work of furthering women's education. Many NGOs operating in Afghanistan are being criticized because, out of the 330 to 350 foreign NGOs operating in the country (with the number proliferating monthly), some have workers who live very lavishly. In 2005 and 2006, the government spent only 44 per cent of the money it received for development projects. Meanwhile, according to the Ministry of Finance, donor countries spent about \$500 million on poorly designed and uncoordinated technical assistance (Alvi-Aziz, 2008).

The last point bears emphasizing, as this is exactly a core issue for girls' and women's education in Afghanistan regardless of such education's status as formal, non-formal, or life-wide. As I wrote some years ago, a 'strong educational base' is desperately required on which to construct 'an intellectual and scientific barrier to the proliferation of ultra-extremist ideologies' predicated upon tribal notions of honour, hospitality and revenge—inclusive of rape as a weapon of such revenge. These words remain true. As of 2006, there are still reports of Taliban members placing bombs and landmines in girls' schools: Sometimes the Taliban post written notes, or so-called 'night letters', in villages, warning girls' schools to close or else face the wrath of their 'military operations' In fact, schools are considered by the Taliban to be soft targets. Within the last year in Helmand province alone, 'almost half the schools have either been burned down, or the teachers have been intimidated into the closing. In Kandahar, 'all schools are now closed in five districts. Attackers have thrown hand grenades through school windows and threatened to throw acid on girls who attend school In September 2006, President Karzai announced that about 200,000 Afghan children 'had been forced out of school this year by threats and physical attacks) (Alvi-Aziz, 2008)

Another reason for women deprivation from education is the people's wrong perception on education and the dominance of some tribal law over Islamic law. According to (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2003), women's lives have often been used as the raw material with which to establish ethnic prominence. Tribal laws and sanctions have routinely taken precedence over Islamic and constitutional laws in deciding gender roles, especially through kinship hierarchies in the rural regions. Tribal power plays, institutions of honour, and inter-tribal shows of patriarchal control have put women's position in jeopardy. Tribal laws view marriages as alliances between groups; women are pawned into marriages and not allowed to divorce, total obedience to the husband and his family are expected, and women are prevented from getting any education. Women are perceived as the receptacles of honour. Hence, they stay in the domestic sphere, observe the veil and are voiceless. The honour of the family, the tribe, and ultimately the nation is invested in women.

***Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4)***

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contains 17 universal goals which were adopted in 2015. It is formulated for achieving a more sustainable and better future for all. SDG4 is dedicated to education. Higher education is mentioned in target 4.3 of SDG4, which aims by 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy. So, the program ensures that most of the female youth and a substantial proportion of women achieve literacy. Higher education also forms an important part of other goals related to no poverty (SDG1); health and wellbeing (SDG3); gender equality (SDG5) governance; decent work and economic growth (SDG8); The SGD4, which has a purpose to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. It offers an opportunity for the global higher education community to evaluate how universities contribute, to step up and demonstrate that building a sustainable future depends on both knowledge creation and collaboration.

***Humanizing education***

According to (Law, 2015) ... A humanizing education depends on the pedagogy of educated people who are coexisting, navigating, or adhering to the socio-political practices of their schools. Constructing practices and beliefs within a humanizing education focus on the current culture, reality, and lived experiences of the education gainers

"Students benefit most from teachers who are professionally competent, but more importantly who simply pay attention, try to improve students' work, and take the time to talk with them—in a word, teachers who care about the subject and the students("ASCD Express 12.02 - Do Students Care? Toward a Humanized Education," n.d.).

To elaborate, it's equally important to nurture students moral and skills while teaching. This is very important in today world where knowledge is traded. According to (Dzulkifli, 2015), Many seem perfectly comfortable to consume whatever is fed into the minds as though the hearth is no longer capable and the soul defeated. Furthermore, IR 4.0 has made changes to our everyday life in many aspects, one of this aspect is a change in the landscape of educational innovation besides providing skills and good manner based education, universities of the future should consider preparing graduates for future life and work that is achieved by IR 4.0 where more smart robots will supplant people in certain activity divisions, education should harness on pertinent information and abilities that could not be replaced by robots. (Dzulkifli, 2015)

***The business model of the University of the Future***

The landscape of higher education is changing more tremendously than ever before. They are facing more intimidating challenges to the long-established business model. While higher education cost rising continuously, its funding sources have eroded. The public is also beginning to question its value against a large amount of money paid by students but often their poor perspective for employment. Furthermore, today's industry is driven by drivers of change that some of them are disruptive. Various key studies are arguing that higher education institutions are in need of developing new business models to sustain and stay relevant. (Ibrahim & Dahlan, 2016)

According to (Faizan et al., 2018), it is the nature of higher education that will need to keep changing due to the change in the public eye, economy and industry demand. It is undeniable that many of the universities have adopted today's changes such as using modern technology but technology working as a support to the education system alone is not enough. It should be at the core of the universities. Therefore, the institutes of higher learnings should be aware of the digital transformation. To elaborate, Universities are in need to know the need of the societies and offer relevant humanized education.

**6. BUSINESS MODEL*****Business Model Canvas (BMC)***

Business Model Canvas (BMC) is a strategic tool for structuring the business model in a lean and structured way ("Business Model Canvas Explained | Enterprising Oxford," n.d.). BMC is a chart that describes a firm's values proposition, the customers to be served, the cost structure and how the program (business) makes money. The step-by-step business model including its provided value proposition is discussed in this paper.

### ***Customer segment***

For building an effective and efficient business model, this section identifies the stakeholders to be served. This business model is designed for serving Afghan women, volunteers, donors and the Afghan government. These customers are to cooperate with each other for the wellbeing of Afghan society. This will help in educating Afghan women of two different ages, (1) students from age 18 to 30, and (2) adults from age 31 to 40. The point of identifying the right customers is to succeed in the program.

### ***Value Proposition***

This is the main and focused part of this project because the point of this BMC is to produce values for the customers. The aim is to improve and enhance Afghan women information and knowledge for a harmonious and humanized educated society of Afghanistan. To create a society where women can equally take part in developing the Afghan economic, education and other needed changes. Due to the poor economy and the free education culture of education in Afghanistan, the first value this business model offers for Afghan women is free education. This free education will improve literacy programs regarding technology and other life skills like farming, cooking, tailoring, family care neighbours' rights and so forth. Other value propositions include entrepreneurship, job opportunities from home, and helping the Ummah. Furthermore, this will also help them resolve their financial issues. The value proposition will be further explained in the Values Proposition Canvas (VPC) table.

### ***Key Partner***

This program will be led by M-University. Because it's comprehensiveness, the program will need many various partners in delivering the promised Value Propositions to the various Customer Segments. The government of Afghanistan is one of the key partners that will help in overcoming the issues and providing facilities for M-University to help in providing humanized and entrepreneurship education for women in Afghanistan. Besides that, the Afghan Ministry of Women Affairs and Ministry of Education to be the key partnership of educating and building the skills of Afghan women. They are expected to play a vital role in facilitating the education system for women by providing educational centres, collaborating in the curriculum and so on. Private sectors, NGOs, UN, OIC, ISESCO and other universities are also expected to participate in facilitating education and building the skills of the Afghan women.

### ***Key Activities***

In order to deliver the proposed value propositions for the customers, there will be various key activities to be conducted and executed. Amongst the key activities are humanizing educational program that includes online and physical classes that will be teaching core subjects such as Islamic studies, entrepreneurship, life skills. Besides that, there will be also facilities management, conference events, responsible innovation and research as part of the key activities for humanized and entrepreneurship education as well as mentoring and coaching. Enhancing digital platform capabilities will be also considered as a key activities.

### ***Key resources***

The key resource includes competent staff, a digital platform that will help in delivering humanized education online remotely. Besides that, the Afghan Alumni of M-University and students are also important key resources that would help during their vocation to educate the women in Afghanistan. Students and adults are to be trained and nurtured in e-marketing on-line capabilities for various business areas on products and services such as food business, tailoring, and so forth.

### ***Customer relationship***

The relationship is another integral block of the BMC. Fortunately, with the advancement of technology, there will be connection with involve parties from anywhere and at any time. Based on the proposed BMC, there are various ways to get the staff, partners and customers connected. Some of these are face to face and online community buildings. For digital communication, there is a different affordable platform available in the market such as eLearning and e-marketplace.



**Channels**

The channels are used for awareness and communication with the customer segments. In order to deliver the proposed values to the customers, there will be various physical as well as digital platforms utilized. In terms of physical channels, delivering the values through physical infrastructure such as Masjids. For the digital channel, there will be digital platforms such as websites, Televisions, mobile application, publications, eLearning and e-marketplace. The function of eLearning is to help Afghan women get education remotely from various lecturer. There will be eMarketing skills taught through both eLearning and physical classes.

**Cost structure**

Based on the key activities, key partnership and key resources identification. The cost will need to be incurred for the digital platforms and its tools such as laptops, Internet, websites, mobile applications and electricity as well books, stationery, government tax and staff salary. These costs will be collected from the Afghan Government, donors, M-University and program revenue streams.

**Revenue stream**

This is the amount of money collected to M-University via various activities. The revenue stream will be from the grant of government of Afghanistan, Islamic development bank, Asian development bank and donation and endowments. The aim of this segment is to cover cost for providing education to women in Afghanistan.

**7. THE VALIDATED BMC AND VPC****7.1. Background of the interviews & survey**

This business model canvas is mainly designed for educating and empowering Afghan women by M-University. In order to validate the initial BMC, interviews have been conducted with different customer segments. After collecting and analysing the interview data, the BMC shown in Table 1 was updated. There was some participant selected from the organizer (M-University) side for interviewing on validating the business model canvas. Regarding Afghan women sample, 20 Afghan women in Afghanistan were interviewed online as well as face to face with some Afghan immigrants living in Malaysia. For Afghan women, there are two different age categories been considered, students from age 18 to 30 years old and adults from age 31 to 40 years old.

**7.2. Key findings**

The M-University authorities have stated in their answer to providing free education that they will do it for a certain amount of time to see the result and whether or not they get support from key partners and volunteers. Furthermore, an experience of an interviewee from M-University who visited the Kabul University recently is worth stating here. *“I met 2 families while I was in Kabul. They were educated married to educated Afghan men. They have children and their parents stay with them. They are great cooks, great potential. We stayed in the guest house at Kabul University where food was hard to get. So, food business from home is an opportunity for them. And we received lovely gifts (handicraft), made by one of the mothers, a great business potential. With the restrictions set by the government; women are not free to go out, women in Kabul/Afghanistan need to get a good education so that they can teach their children at home and do business from home because of security reasons. They need to have business ideas/models and learn to prepare budgets, keeping records/accounts and prepare simple financial statements”*.

Women, both students and adults who have been interviewed, have shown full interest in such kind of educational model. During the interviews, they said that it is their pleasure and hope to have equal opportunity for gaining basic skills in technology and other life skills as men have in order to have a better quality of life. Furthermore, they are looking for a kind of program that educates them to get employed or have their own businesses.; the majority of them stated that they cannot afford any amount of payment to get education. Therefore, in this validated BMC, a freemium humanized education has been proposed. Besides, a survey has been conducted with Afghan students that are studying in Afghan and abroad universities regarding their contribution as volunteers to educating and nurturing Afghan women. Most of them showed full support of dedicating their part-time to Afghan women training and education. In addition, both Afghan women and M-University's on humanized and entrepreneurship education in various areas such as farming, tailoring,

cooking, preparing a budget for a household, teach children at home (pre-school), open food business; catering business, on-line business, teach English.

### 7.3. VALIDATED BMC

Table 1: Validated BMC

Key Partner	Value Activities	Value Proposition	Customer Relationships	Customer Segments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Government of Afghanistan</li> <li>- United Nations</li> <li>- OIC/ISESCO</li> <li>- Private sectors</li> <li>- Ministries of higher education and women affairs</li> <li>- Researchers</li> <li>- Finance Division</li> <li>-Other universities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Provide humanized education for women</li> <li>- Facilities Management</li> <li>-Conferences &amp; events</li> <li>- Responsible research &amp; innovation</li> <li>- enhanced digital platform capabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Freemium, humanized education for women</li> <li>-Job opportunities from home</li> <li>-Women teacher</li> <li>-enhancing Afghan society well-being</li> <li>-entrepreneur</li> <li>- enhance employment opportunity</li> <li>- Producing balanced talents</li> <li>- Helping the Ummah</li> <li>- Scholarship and research</li> <li>- increasing knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Face to face communication</li> <li>-Majid</li> <li>-Community building</li> <li>-Online communication</li> <li>-networking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women</li> <li>a. Students 18-30</li> <li>b. Adults 31-40</li> <li>-Donors &amp; Sponsors</li> <li>-Volunteers</li> <li>-Afghan Government</li> <li>-Industry</li> </ul>
	<p>Key Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- competent staff</li> <li>-digital platform</li> <li>-Afghan Alumni</li> <li>-Student</li> </ul>		<p>Channels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Physical infrastructure</li> <li>- Masjid</li> <li>- Digital platforms: eLearning &amp; eMarketplace</li> <li>-publication</li> </ul>	
<p>Cost Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost of building</li> <li>- Cost of stationaries</li> <li>- Cost of electricity</li> <li>- Cost of digital platform</li> <li>- Governmental tax</li> <li>- Staff salary</li> <li>-Cost of facilities management &amp; events</li> </ul>		<p>Revenue Stream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- grant from AFG-g, ISESCO, IDB, ADB, UN funding, UNESCO</li> <li>- Grant CSR: coperate social responsibility grant</li> <li>- Donation and Endowments</li> <li>- Consultancy fees</li> </ul>		

### 7.4. Value Proposition Canvas

Value Proposition Canvas (VPC) is a great tool for ensuring that a service or product is positioned within the customer needs and values("What is the Value Proposition Canvas? - B2B International," n.d.). After conducting interviews, the VPC shown in table 2 has been validated.

**Table 2: Validated VPC of the program**

Customers	Product & services	Gain creators	Pain relievers	Customer Job	Gains	Pains
<b>Afghan women (students, adults)</b>	Trusted & competent in delivering humansing educational program	- Educational program and awareness. - Events and conferences	-Competent staffs -Technology -Investment -Research	-Learn knowledge -attend the education centre -use technology	- Gain basic knowledge & skills -Bright future knowledgeable society	-lack of knowledge - poverty - missing basic right - unemployment
<b>Donors</b>	Trusted & competent in delivering humansing educational program	-Helping the ummah. -Resolving financial problems	-Investing -expanding business.	-Giving charity and zakat -Making a contribution to society's wellbeing	-Developed society -Producing balanced talents	Spend money
<b>Volunteers</b>	Trusted & competent in delivering humansing educational programme -Global networking	Professional volunteer	-Help remotely -Allocate free and part-time - Help during vocation	Teach Afghan women -prepare study materials - research	-Serve the Umman. -Society well-being -Bright future -branch in self-knowledge	Free teaching Spend time and energy
<b>Afghan Government</b>	Trusted & competent in delivering humansing educational programme	- Universities and schools - MOWA, MOHE	- Universities buildings during vocations Communication channel Masjids as physical infrastructure	- Help IIUM in reaching the women -Prepare curriculum for women with IIUM -Improve educational policies	-An educated and balanced society -Developed economy -balanced talents	Misperception regarding women education -unbalanced society -Poverty -Lack of teaching materials

## 8. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

Education plays a vital role in the wellbeing of society. A society's political, economic and cultural growth directly depends on the education of its dwellers. Education is a tool for contributing to the development and formation of knowledge, skill, belief, human values, wisdom and thoughts. It can be surely said that education is a solution to eradicate underdevelopment in today's industrialized world. Unfortunately, the majority of Afghan citizens are deprived of this invaluable asset. This is true especially for Afghan women in all over the country. Most of them even cannot have basic reading and writing ability. Based on the literature review, the essential problem of Afghan women is illiteracy. Therefore, the main aim of this paper is to propose a generic BMC for providing humanizing & entrepreneurship education for Afghan women.

This paper proposes a business model for M-University to include community engagement activities. The community engagement activities can be leveraged in helping to overcome the Afghan women challenges and problems. The contribution of this paper includes offering a conceptual and validated business model in BMC and VPC format. This



conceptual business model can be further customized by other universities for community engagement activities. For future work, the conceptual model proposed in this paper will be implemented by preparing a business plan as well as project and change management plan for the program. Besides that, a meeting with the Afghan Embassy in Malaysia will be conducted to further proceed with the program and real-time implementation.

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