

Locating and Analysing Earthquakes: Training for Afghan Academics in Germany

One participant, Dr Hamidullah Waizy, commented: “The work on data related to earthquakes that occur in Afghanistan, neighbouring countries and the world, was really interesting. We will share our new knowledge and experiences with our colleagues and students back in Afghanistan.”

GFZ and their partners, including the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee, Kabul University, and the Afghan Geological Survey, operate a network of 15 temporary seismic measurement stations in northeast Afghanistan. The network is part of a project called Natural Laboratory Central Asia that aims at collecting data that could provide deep insights into this tectonically highly active region. SeisComp3 is a powerful tool for acquiring and analysing such data.

On Tuesday, 27th November 2018, an earthquake with a magnitude of 5.2 shook Afghanistan’s northeast. It was the strongest crustal earthquake recorded since the seismic network is operational. This presented a unique opportunity for the Afghan trainees to use SeisComp3 with real-time data from Afghanistan and Central Asia.

A representative from GFZ, Dr Sofia Kufner, emphasised: “Participants had the opportunity to learn the basics of earthquake monitoring with data from their own country. This event, with its real-time learning effect, showed us once again how important a seismic observation network is for that region.”

The trainees can continue using the software in Afghanistan and have access to data provided by many permanent seismic stations in central Asia. In the long term, research aims at making the region more resilient to earthquakes. The training activities are a first step to build a network of Afghan professionals in relevant institutions that can support research on the ground.

The programme Academic Mining Education in Afghanistan (AMEA) is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Foreign Office (AA) since 2014. AMEA aims at improving academic mining education in Afghanistan to facilitate the full utilisation of the Afghan extractive sector’s potential. The programme has been helping to modernise university training, adapting it to industry and labour market needs and building an educational network in close cooperation with the Afghan Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), the Afghan Ministry of Mining and Petroleum (MoMP) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). So far, AMEA has organised academic courses, scholarships and internship programmes in Iran, Germany, and China for more than 240 Afghan students and lecturers providing them access to up-to-date technical knowledge and innovative teaching methods. The programme has also provided practically oriented advanced training and networking events on mining education for more than 600 university lecturers since 2014.

Teaser text:

Kabul, 10th December 2018 – Today, three Afghan professors and lecturers from Kabul Polytechnic University, Kabul University, and Balkh University returned to Kabul. For two weeks, they participated in a training at the German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ) in Potsdam, Germany. They learned how to operate GFZ’s software SeisComp 3 for localising and analysing earthquakes. It is used to better understand tectonic activities in central Asia, including Afghanistan. The Afghan-German Cooperation’s Academic Mining Education in Afghanistan (AMEA) programme facilitated the activity.

Image:

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