

ANALYZING THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN FACING TALIBAN RESTRICTION WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN 2021

Adilia Khansa Azzahrah

*Department of International Relations
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang
Malang, Indonesia*

khasaazzahrah5@gmail.com

Gonda Yumitro

*Department of International Relations
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang
Malang, Indonesia*

gonda@umm.ac.id

e-mail correspondent: khasaazzahrah5@gmail.com

INFO ARTIKEL

Article History

Received

29 July 2025

Revised

12 January 2025

Accepted

26 January 2025

Kata Kunci

UN; education; woman;
Taliban.

Keywords:

PBB; pendidikan;
perempuan; Taliban.

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis peran PBB dalam mengatasi pembatasan pendidikan perempuan yang dilakukan oleh pemerintah Taliban pada tahun 2021. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan. Data primer berupa hasil penelitian dari jurnal penelitian yang diambil melalui database Scopus, Publish or Perish 8, Google Scholar, dan google sebagai metode pengumpulan data dengan menggunakan kata kunci Afghanistan, Diskriminasi, PBB, Pendidikan, Pembatasan dengan pembatasan tahun 2019-2024. Data sekunder berupa berbagai literatur yang relevan. Data yang terkumpul kemudian dianalisis menggunakan perspektif Hak Asasi Manusia. Penulis menemukan bahwa PBB telah berperan dalam menyelesaikan masalah yang sudah berkembang di Afghanistan, dan upaya untuk mencegah masalah lebih lanjut, baik melalui kegiatan advokasi, pemberian bantuan teknis, dan dukungan kemanusiaan. Selain itu, PBB melibatkan masyarakat internasional untuk memberikan tekanan kepada pemerintah Taliban dan melakukan upaya dialog dengan pemerintah Taliban.

Abstrak

The purpose of this research is to analyze the role of the UN in addressing the restrictions on women's education imposed by the Taliban government in 2021. This study employs a qualitative approach with a literature review methodology. Primary data consists of research findings from journals accessed through databases like Scopus, Publish or Perish 8, Google Scholar, and Google, using keywords such as Afghanistan, Discrimination, UN, Education, and Restrictions, with a timeframe limit from 2019 to 2024. Secondary data includes various relevant literature. The collected data is then analyzed using a Human Rights perspective. The author finds that the UN has played a role in addressing ongoing issues in Afghanistan and in efforts to prevent further problems, through advocacy activities, technical assistance, and humanitarian support. Additionally, the UN engages the international community to exert pressure on the Taliban government and to facilitate dialogue with them.

INTRODUCTION

The Taliban's ban on women attending school in Afghanistan has had a profoundly negative impact on Afghan society as a whole, as education is crucial for the nation's prosperity and development. Afghan women are increasingly aware of gender roles, patriarchy, and gender inequality and they are eager to address these issues. (Rojan Afrouz, Beth R Crisp, & Ann Taket, 2022). Women and girls are significant contributors to the workforce and have the potential to make a major impact in various fields, including politics and economics. Moreover, this ban reinforces patriarchal views and prejudices about women, contributing to an increase in gender inequality for future generations (Mutawally, 2022).

For many children, particularly in rural areas and especially for girls, completing primary school remains an elusive dream (Parwaiz Najibi & Claire McLachlan, 2023). According to UNICEF, one of the main challenges facing Afghanistan is that about two-thirds of the female population is currently out of school (UNICEF, 2019). The Taliban has barred women from various professions, including teaching, medicine, and law, as well as from enrolling in universities and schools (Lestari, 2021). The

efforts initiated to improve education faced fragility after the Taliban's return to power in 2021 (Moghadass, 2021). The ban on girls' education beyond the sixth grade has had detrimental psychological and emotional effects on them (Easar et al., 2023).

The Taliban claims that the ban on women's education is intended to protect women from negative Western influences and to ensure that the education they receive aligns with Islamic values (Mutawally, 2022). Since taking control of Afghanistan in August 2021, the Taliban has enforced stringent laws against women, including prohibitions on education and restrictions on work outside the home (Abdul Hamid, Che Mohd Razali, & Wan Abdul Ghapar, 2023). This has occurred amidst more than four decades of ongoing conflict that has devastated the Afghan education system.

Afghanistan is a country with strong cultural norms that favor men, leading to the marginalization of women. The struggles faced by Afghan women are deeply rooted in the country's long history (UNICEF, 2019). Over the past four decades, continuous conflict has severely impacted Afghanistan's education system, leaving almost all Afghan women without access to education (Saleem Mazhar & Goraya, 2020). The Taliban, an

Islamist militant group, previously ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, enforcing a harsh version of sharia law that included severe restrictions on women's education (Bhattacharya Subhendu & Singh Radhika, 2021). Under their rule, women were prohibited from pursuing formal education and faced significant limitations on their freedom to engage in activities outside the home.

After the US invasion in 2001, the Taliban was removed from power, and a new government was established with international assistance (Wenno, 2012). During this period, Afghan women regained certain rights, including the ability to pursue formal education. In 2001, there were almost no female students, lecturers, or employees, but the situation improved over the following 20 years (Hayward & Karim, 2019). However, the Taliban regained control in August 2021 after the fall of the US-backed government (Maior, Torri, Boni, & Maiorano, 2022). This resurgence poses significant challenges to educational opportunities, especially for girls (Dr. Shahzadi Seema, Brigadier Dr. Muhammad Naeem Akbar Qazi, & Dr. Madeeha Neelam, 2023). Since the Taliban took power, access to education for girls and women has significantly declined (Barbara Kameniar,

Gali Weiss, & Mursal Nazari, 2023). The United Nations (UN), established in 1945, is a pivotal international organization dedicated to promoting peace, security, and human rights worldwide (Arhanudya et al., 2023). One of its primary missions is to enforce human rights, with a strong focus on women's rights. This commitment was reinforced with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, which asserts that all individuals, regardless of gender, are entitled to equal rights in education, employment, and protection from discrimination (Maria Margaretha et al., 2024).

To advance this agenda, the UN introduced the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979, obligating ratifying states to eliminate gender-based discrimination (Adlini, 2024). This convention serves as a cornerstone of international efforts to promote women's rights across various domains, including education, health, and political participation. The establishment of UN Women in 2010 further enhanced these efforts by concentrating on gender equality and women's empowerment (Zhafir et al., 2024).

This body collaborates with member states to develop policies and programs that

support women's rights and enhance their participation in various aspects of life, such as politics and economics. The UN also employs multiple monitoring and reporting mechanisms to document human rights violations, including those related to women's rights, providing analyses of specific situations and encouraging governments to take corrective actions (Haikal Mubarak et al., 2024). Through these mechanisms, the UN actively monitors human rights abuses and advocates for governmental reforms to safeguard women's rights. Initiatives such as International Women's Day highlight ongoing challenges and promote the adoption of policies aimed at achieving gender equality (Masruroh, 2022). The UN encourages countries to implement policies that uphold women's rights and address issues such as gender-based violence and discrimination. Collaboration with civil society organizations is also crucial; the UN partners with non-governmental organizations to strengthen advocacy for women's rights, ensuring that local voices are heard and reflected in policy decisions (Nabila Riani & Andi Aina Ilmih, 2024). Empirical evidence highlights the UN's efforts to support women's rights, particularly regarding the situation faced by women

under Taliban rule. Previous research demonstrates that the UN has initiated various actions to address human rights violations against women, including education and access to basic services. For instance, a study by Tsabitah Rizqi Ekanoviarini and Aji Wibowo (2022) emphasizes that although Afghanistan ratified CEDAW, its implementation remains weak under Taliban governance, which systematically restricts women's access to education. This study stresses the need for the UN to take more proactive measures in enforcing international commitments. Additionally, research by Rahmawati et al. (2021) indicates that UN Women and UNICEF have sought to provide informal educational support for women in Afghanistan, creating community-based educational programs and training for female teachers. However, access to these resources is still limited due to Taliban policies. Reports from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) published in 2022 highlight the negative consequences of the ban on women's education, noting the resultant depression and anxiety many women face as a result of these restrictions and underscoring the need for further action by the UN. In contrast, my research differs

from previous studies by concentrating specifically on analyzing the role of the UN in restoring women's education following the Taliban's takeover. While prior research tends to emphasize human rights violations and existing efforts, my study will assess the effectiveness of UN diplomatic strategies and their impact on changing Taliban policies. Furthermore, I will employ a qualitative approach that includes interviews with women directly affected by Taliban policies, providing deeper personal insights into the challenges they face and their hopes for the UN's role. Therefore, this research aims not only to discuss the UN's efforts in a general sense but also to evaluate the tangible impact of these initiatives on women's lives in Afghanistan and offer evidence-based recommendations for future improvements. Ultimately, this study seeks to analyze the role of the UN and the restrictions imposed by the Taliban on Afghan women.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

International Organizations

International organizations particularly the United Nations (UN), are crucial in promoting peace, security, and cooperation among nations (Santoso et al., 2023). They engage in various activities to tackle global challenges and specific cases, such as passing

resolutions that outline the global community's stance on issues like human rights and gender equality. Advocacy is another vital function, as these organizations raise awareness about pressing global issues, mobilize public opinion, and urge governments to take action through campaigns focused on women's rights, education, and health (Sanders & Scanlon, 2021). Additionally, organizations provide technical assistance to member states, helping them implement policies that uphold human rights through training programs and resource allocation. In times of crisis, they also mobilize humanitarian aid to assist affected populations, particularly vulnerable groups like women and children (Amanda Putri et al., 2024).

Human Rights

Human rights are fundamental rights that belong to all individuals, regardless of nationality, gender, or background, based on principles of dignity, equality, and mutual respect. The core principles of human rights include universality, which asserts that everyone is entitled to the same rights; indivisibility, emphasizing that rights are interrelated and cannot be fully realized in isolation; and equality and non-discrimination, highlighting the need to

eliminate barriers that prevent women from enjoying their rights fully. The UN has established various instruments to address discrimination and promote gender equality, with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) being a pivotal document. CEDAW emphasizes the necessity for states to take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas, including education, employment, and political participation. Understanding the roles of international organizations and the principles of human rights, particularly women's rights, is essential for analyzing the UN's efforts in addressing challenges faced by women in contexts like Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, providing a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of international interventions and advocacy in promoting gender equality and protecting human rights.

Human rights are moral principles or norms that define the standards of human behavior and are regularly protected as substantive rights in substantive law, municipal, and international law (VOA, 2024). They are commonly understood as inalienable, fundamental rights that are inherent in all human beings, regardless of their age, ethnic origin, location, language,

religion, ethnicity, or any other status. These rights are univesal, egalitarian, and applicable everywhere and at every time (Kusnadi & Wulandari, 2024). They are based on principles of dignity, equality, and mutual respect, which are shared across cultures, religions, and philosophies (Kamruzzaman et al., 2022)

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach, specifically utilizing library research methods. The study's data consists of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data includes research findings obtained from platforms such as Scopus, Publish or Perish 8, Google Scholar, and Google. Secondary data comprises various relevant literature.

The purpose of this approach is to provide a comprehensive explanation and answer the research questions by deeply understanding the issues at hand. This is aimed at enhancing the validity of the information by effectively analyzing a range of documents, journals, news articles, and books used as reference sources. Following this, conclusions will be drawn based on the described data.

The collected data will be comprehended, recorded, and analyzed from a Human Rights perspective. Ultimately, conclusions will be formulated using an inductive reasoning pattern to achieve generalizations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Restrictions on Women's Education by the Taliban

The Taliban managed to retake the Afghan presidential palace on August 15, 2021 (Maier et al., 2022). Many Afghans, especially women, ran to the airport to leave their country after the event. They do not want to relive the crimes that occurred during the Taliban rule. As a result, some families have been forced to send their children to be protected from the Taliban's brutal actions to Pakistan or Iran. The policies made by the Taliban severely restrict the mobility of women in the country, there are at least thirteen Taliban policies, including: 1) Traveling with men is not allowed without the consent of their relatives; 2) Making friends with the opposite sex is not allowed if it is not approved by their relatives; 3) Except for family members, it is not allowed to socialize with the opposite sex who is more than 12 years old; 4) They are only allowed to attend girls' schools and are not allowed to

attend public schools; 5) Avoid using any makeup on the face, including nail polish; 6) It is not allowed to dance and music; 7) The Taliban organization will repatriate working women and require only their male relatives to work; 8) Requiring women to cover their entire body with burqas. 9) It is not permissible to communicate using a loud voice that makes others hear our voice, either at women's events or in front of many people; 10) Avoid wearing high heels shoes/sandals; 11) It is not allowed to relax in the courtyard of the residence; 12) Women must not be shown in the media or films; and 13) Teachers in schools are not allowed to teach students of the opposite sex (Rhodri Davies, 2021).

They do this by formulating policies that are by Islamic law. The Taliban want to create a peaceful and peaceful world. They believe that if these policies are implemented, they will be able to realize a peaceful world. Instead of fostering world peace, the Taliban instead committed immoral acts against women, such as forced marriage, prostitution, and kidnapping. The Taliban government's policies restrict women's mobility in Afghanistan, especially women. Taliban rules stipulate that punishment for violators can include public humiliation, stoning, whipping, and even the death

penalty (Lestari, 2021). In addition, the Taliban banned taxi drivers from transporting women who were not wearing burqas. Even the death of a young woman was reported as a result of her failure to wear a burqa. Another punishment imposed by the Taliban on customers who love songs in traditional markets is to force them to walk during the day when the sun is shining until they faint. The Taliban organization also upholds social norms; Violations will receive warnings and consequences, including detention, public humiliation, beatings, and whipping. The Taliban are using Islam for their purposes, and Afghans are obliged to obey their orders. Residents (Lestari, 2021). The Taliban stated the rights of Afghan women and girls two days after taking over the government, on August 17, 2021 (Bogaert, 2022). The Taliban stated that women are an important part of society, and they will provide women and girls with rights, such as working and studying by Islamic law, according to its spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid (BBC News Indonesia, 2021).

According to Tsabitah Rizqi Ekanoviarini and Aji Wibowo, the Taliban government continues to commit human rights violations, including restrictions on women's rights. In Afghanistan, the Taliban

discriminates against women and restricts human rights and freedoms, especially women (Tsabitah Rizqi Ekanoviarini & Aji Wibowo, 2022). Human rights and freedoms are restricted, and discrimination against women is perpetrated in Afghanistan under Taliban rule. Women are not allowed to do anything in this situation, including studying. Not only are women required to cover themselves in public and are prohibited from leaving the government, but they are also not allowed to travel alone without a male partner. These are some examples of actions that aim to restrict women's rights (Batuwael, Hanafia, & Leatemia, 2023) Therefore, women must fight against the Taliban to restore their rights that have been revoked (Lestari, 2021). These restrictions made by the Taliban have a terrible psychological impact during interviews with Afghan women and girls, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) heard distressing reports of school-dropping girls showing signs of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts, saying they felt they were living a life without purpose and uncertainty for the future (Sabar Subekti, 2023). Some have even isolated themselves from their families, while others have turned to narcotics, further exacerbating the drug

crisis in Afghanistan. Those who use narcotics see it as a way to escape and create an alternative reality for themselves (Belquis Ahmadi & Hodei Sultan, 2023).

Not only the psychological impact, prohibiting women from receiving education and working also hampers the country's economic growth, the restrictions on education by the Taliban have caused difficulties for educators to teach and students to learn, resulting in low learning performance in Afghanistan. (Dewi Sartika, 2021). Women's participation in the labor force has significantly helped economic growth in OECD countries for decades. Gender and sustainable development show that GDP, or the amount of goods and services that have added value generated by various production facilities across the country over some time, increases significantly if women are employed at the same level as men. It has been proven that women's involvement in decision-making groups, committees, and the business world has a significant positive impact on effectiveness (Matiullah Qazizada, 2024). Current restrictions have impacted women's access to services across Afghanistan. Access to health services, markets and water, sanitation, and hygiene resources for women and girls has long been complex and depends

on many factors. However, since the de facto authority (DFA) took over the country's power in 2021, women's unaccompanied access to health facilities and markets has declined; while the proportion of those who reported that access when accompanied had increased (CARE International, ICRC, & UN Women, 2022).

The Role of the United Nations in Handling Cases of Restrictions on Women's Education by the Taliban

After the Taliban took power in Afghanistan in August 2021 (Maior et al., 2022), they imposed restrictions on women's education, including a ban on girls from secondary education. The UN has taken several steps to address the issue, although results are still limited. Some of the roles played by the UN through its officials and agencies such as UNICEF and UN Women, have been vocal in condemning restrictions on women's education and urging the Taliban to lift the ban (Haack et al., 2020). However, the Taliban have not responded substantially. Top U.N. officials, such as Secretary-General António Guterres, and the heads of U.N. agencies such as UNICEF and UN Women, have issued public statements condemning the Taliban's decision to ban girls from accessing Secondary Education. They

stressed that this action is a violation of human rights and will have long-term consequences that are detrimental to Afghanistan (Sevastik, 2020). The UN Security Council has held a special session to discuss the situation in Afghanistan, including the impact of restrictions on women's education. During this session, council members voiced their concerns and called on the Taliban to respect the rights of women and girls, including the right to education. The UN General Assembly has also issued resolutions and statements condemning the Taliban's actions and calling for respect for human rights, including the right to education for all. This resolution, while not legally binding, sends a strong message about the international consensus on the importance of women's education (Sevastik, 2020). UN representatives, including the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Afghanistan, have engaged directly with Taliban officials to convey the international community's concerns about restrictions on women's education. They have stressed that respect for women's rights, including education, is essential to the credibility and international recognition of the Taliban government. The UN has been coordinating with member states, regional

organizations, and international civil society groups to strengthen diplomatic pressure on the Taliban over women's education issues. This coordinated approach aims to show an international united front and increase influence over the Taliban. Despite these significant advocacy efforts and diplomatic pressure, the Taliban has still not substantially changed its policy on women's education.

This shows the challenges faced in influencing groups whose ideologies are contrary to international human rights norms (World Bank, 2024). However, continued diplomatic pressure from the UN and the international community remains an important tool to highlight these issues, keep them a priority, and seek to bring about change over time. This advocacy is also important to show support and solidarity to Afghan women and girls affected by these restrictions. The UN monitors the human rights situation in Afghanistan, including women's right to education, and reports violations through mechanisms such as the UN Special Rapporteur for Afghanistan. The report highlights the devastating impact of restrictions on girls. The United Nations, through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner monitor the human rights situation in the country (Faadhilah A & A. Nur Anandya, 2022). After the Taliban's takeover of power, these institutions have paid special attention to the impact of Taliban policies on women's and girls' rights, including the right to education. The UN human rights monitoring team gathered information from a variety of sources, including interviews with victims and witnesses, reports from civil society organizations, and dialogues with Taliban officials. They document cases of restrictions or bans on women's education, as well as their impact on individuals and society.

The UN periodically publishes reports on the human rights situation in Afghanistan, including a special section on the rights of women and girls. The report underscores trends and patterns of violations, including restrictions on access to education or example, a UNAMA report published in 2022 highlighted the adverse impacts of the Taliban ban on secondary education for girls (ELF, 2022). The UN Human Rights Council has appointed a Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Afghanistan. The Special Rapporteur monitors and reports in-depth on specific human rights issues, including the rights of women and girls. They

made visits to Afghanistan (if permitted), engaged with Taliban officials and other stakeholders, and presented their findings and recommendations to the Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly. UN findings and reports on restrictions on women's education are used for evidence-based advocacy with the Taliban, UN member states, and other international stakeholders (Rhodri Davies, 2021). By highlighting the real impact of Taliban policies on the lives of Afghan women and girls, the UN seeks to increase pressure for policy change. UN monitoring and reporting have played an important role in documenting and highlighting the deteriorating human rights situation in Afghanistan, especially about the rights of women and girls.

The report provides a factual and objective assessment of the impact of restrictions on education, which strengthens the advocacy and diplomatic efforts of the UN and other international actors. However, reporting alone is not enough to bring about change, especially given the Taliban's uncompromising stance. Sustained and coordinated international action and pressure are needed to translate these findings into real change for women and girls in Afghanistan (Reisy Fitria Cherly, 2022). The UN

continues to play an important role in ensuring that this situation remains in the spotlight and that the international community remains engaged in promoting respect for human rights in Afghanistan. UN agencies such as UNICEF and its local partners continue to provide informal education support for Afghan girls through community-based initiatives, although their reach is limited UNICEF and its local partners have developed alternative education programs to reach girls affected by the Taliban's ban on secondary education. The program includes community-based informal classes, distance learning, and home education initiatives. The goal is to provide sustainable access to education, albeit in a different format than formal schools (Aryono, 2023) UNICEF and its local partners are working closely with community leaders, women's groups, and families to identify practical solutions that enable girls to continue their learning.

This community-based approach is important to ensure the acceptance and sustainability of alternative education initiatives amid restrictions imposed by the Taliban. UNICEF provides training and support for teachers, especially women teachers, to facilitate informal learning for

girls. This includes training on adaptive teaching methods, the use of technology for distance learning, and strategies for creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. UNICEF and its partners provide learning materials, such as textbooks, stationery, and digital resources, to support the continuity of girls' education. They also work to adapt learning materials to fit the context of informal learning and to overcome barriers such as limited access to the internet or technological devices (Aryono, 2023). While providing direct support for alternative education initiatives, UNICEF also advocates to the Taliban and other stakeholders on the importance of inclusive and equitable education for all children, regardless of gender. They emphasized the long-term benefits of women's education for Afghanistan's social and economic development. Despite the efforts made, the reach of this alternative education program is limited compared to the scale of the challenges that are faced.

Limited resources, security constraints, and barriers posed by Taliban policies have limited the ability of UNICEF and its local partners to reach all girls in need. In addition, while these initiatives provide access to basic learning, they may not

completely replace the quality formal education to which every child should be entitled (Wittrock, 2022) nevertheless, in the current Afghan context, these alternative education programs represent an important lifeline for many out-of-school girls, allowing them to continue their learning and keep their hopes alive. Continued support from the international community for this initiative, while continuing to advocate for Taliban policy change, will be critical to advancing the right to education for all girls in Afghanistan. Although the UN has taken various roles and initiatives in dealing with the Taliban's restrictions on women's education in Afghanistan, the results of such efforts have so far been limited and have not resulted in substantial changes in Taliban policy. Advocacy and diplomatic pressure by the UN and the international community have not succeeded in persuading the Taliban to lift the ban on secondary education for girls (Maley & Jamal, 2022)

The Taliban have remained in their position, prioritizing their conservative interpretation of Islamic law over international human rights. UN monitoring and reporting on the human rights situation in Afghanistan has helped raise global awareness about the detrimental impact of restrictions on women's education. However,

this awareness has not translated into a real change in Taliban policy. Alternative education programs supported by UNICEF and its local partners have provided access to learning for some Afghan girls (UNICEF, 2019). However, the reach of these initiatives is limited, and they cannot completely replace quality formal education. The UN's efforts to engage with the Taliban on the issue of women's education have been hampered by the group's uncompromising stance. The Taliban has shown little willingness to accommodate international demands on women's rights. Although the UN has worked to keep the situation in Afghanistan a matter of international concern, The number of other global crises and the dwindling international presence in Afghanistan have made it increasingly difficult to maintain consistent pressure on the Taliban.

The Taliban has proven difficult to influence through traditional diplomatic channels, and the influence of the UN is limited without solid support and coordinated action from its member states (World Bank, 2024). Nonetheless, sustained efforts from the UN remain important to maintain international pressure, provide support for alternative education initiatives, and voice the rights of Afghan women and girls (Ikhsana & Imroatun Khasanah, 2020). Long-

term and strategic engagement with the Taliban, coupled with expanded support for community-based education programs, will be critical to achieving meaningful progress in addressing these challenges. However, significant results may require a shift in the Taliban's approach, which may only be achieved through a combination of sustained international pressure and changing internal dynamics in Afghanistan.

The Role of the United Nations in Preventing the Taliban's Continuation of Restrictions on Women's Education

Monitoring the human rights situation in Afghanistan is crucial after the Taliban's takeover, especially regarding the rights of women and girls. The main UN agency for this task is the UNHCHR (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights). UNHCHR needs to assign human rights monitors on the ground to collect data and testimony on restrictions on women's rights, including the right to education. They must interview victims, families, teachers, activists, and other parties in secret. The information collected is then compiled into a periodic report that is widely published. The report includes not only the abuses that occurred but also an analysis of their impact

on Afghan women and society in general (Ikhsana & Imroatun Khasanah, 2020). The report from the UNHCHR is the basis for the UN and its member states to pressure the Taliban diplomatically, for example through a Human Rights Council resolution or the General Assembly, to stop restricting rights. The report could also trigger other countries to impose sanctions or review cooperation with the Taliban regime. Other UN agencies such as UN Women and UNICEF can also contribute to monitoring, focusing on specific issues such as gender-based violence or child labor. All UN entities need to coordinate data collection and advocacy. Consistent monitoring and reporting will let the Taliban know that the world is constantly watching their actions and keeping an eye on the issue of Women's rights, especially education, remains the focus of global attention (Reisy Fitria Cherly, 2022). This will put additional pressure on the Taliban to stop its discriminatory policies. The UN has been active in addressing the Taliban's human rights abuses against women's education. As a result, legal protection for Afghan women is urgently needed to protect them from such abuses and to improve their position as women in society (Batuwael et al., 2023).

By its responsibilities, the United Nations has ratified the UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) which was established on December 10, 1948 (Momen, 2022), to assist in the defense and enforcement of human rights. The elimination of all types of discrimination is the goal of this convention (Argenti et al., 2023). In 2003, after ratifying the UN General Assembly convention on women's human rights (Qazi, Supervisor, & Islam, 2019), Afghanistan was responsible for taking the necessary measures to protect and guarantee the human rights of women to support peace and sustainable development in Afghanistan, the UN Security Council established a political mission called UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan). UN Security Council Resolution No. 1401 gives a mandate to UNAMA, which was established on 28 March 2002 (Asirwadana, 2022). In addition, UNAMA was created because the Afghan government asked for help for them and their people in realizing peace and progress. In addition, to support the implementation of the 2001 Bonn Agreement on the reconstruction of Afghanistan after the U.S. invasion of the country in response to the September 11 attacks, UNAMA was established. UNAMA's leader since March

2020 is Deborah Lyons (Asirwadana, 2022), Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. Under the guidance of the UN Secretary-General, UNAMA has been carrying out its mission together with other UN organizations since 2008 (Druet et al., 2021). To assist the Afghan government and people in meeting their most pressing national needs, this requires funding and implementation. Multifaceted and integrated projects (Faadhilah A & A. Nur Anandya, 2022).

UNAMA's current clearer mandate is to provide the best services, support future elections, and enhance the capacity to defend and advocate for human rights, including supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, defending children affected by armed conflict, and preventing them from engaging in it. During this time, UNAMA's responsibilities are renewed annually to meet the needs of countries receiving assistance. UNAMA's mission has been extended until March 17, 2022, starting September 17, 2021 (Druet et al., 2021). In addition, the UN requested the Secretary-General to prepare a written report by January 31, 2022, outlining UNAMA's operational recommendations and mandate strategy regarding recent changes in political, security, and social events such as the Afghan

presidential election on August 16, 2021 (Faadhilah A & A. Nur Anandya, 2022). The UN has provided humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, including support for education, to help the country recover from the conflict and ensure that everyone, including women, has access to education. In addition, the United Nations has advocated for women's and girls' rights to education through various mechanisms, including the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Human Rights Council (HRC). The UN also seeks to address the root causes of gender inequality and discrimination, including lack of access to education, and to promote gender equality and women's empowerment (Mifin Amala, 2020). In addition to the involvement of international organizations, the UN is also seeking dialogue with the Taliban government. The Afghan Taliban government has condemned the UN Security Council's plan to appoint a special envoy as a human rights and gender advocate.

The plan was deemed "unnecessary" by the Taliban. The Taliban government is not officially recognized by any state or global institution. The government is referred to by the United Nations as the "de facto authority of the Taliban". Many of them have refused to communicate with the Kabul government

to encourage the Taliban to reduce their influence on women and girls. An additional option is to end the relationship until the Taliban makes a condition, such as allowing women to go back to school. The UN Security Council resolution calls for the appointment of a special envoy for Afghanistan. The purpose of the resolution is to improve relations with the country and Taliban leaders. Since the Taliban returned to power in August 2021 (Tayeb & Noursin, 2023), they asserted their right to resort to social violence by their harsh interpretation of Islam, they consider the plea to comply with international law to be unnecessary interference in their internal affairs (VOA, 2023). The UN special envoy for Afghanistan, Roza Otunbayeva, stated that talking and engaging with the Taliban government does not mean justifying their policies, but rather it is necessary to do so to guarantee change. Otunbayeva stated that mistrust between related parties is still a problem. Instead, he stated that they continue to make various efforts to ensure that the discussion space remains open and that change can be achieved (Maharani, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that the United Nations has made various efforts to deal with the case of restrictions on women's education by the Taliban in Afghanistan since they returned to power in August 2021. Efforts include advocacy and diplomatic pressure through public statements, UN Security Council sessions, UN General Assembly resolutions, and direct engagement with Taliban officials to urge the lifting of the ban on education for women. Then, the UN also monitors and reports on the human rights situation. Including women's right to education, through mechanisms such as the UN Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan and periodic reports by UN agencies. The provision of humanitarian aid and informal education support for Afghan girls is also implemented through alternative education programs run by UNICEF and its local partners. Not only that, dialogue efforts with the Taliban government are also carried out with the appointment of a UN special envoy for Afghanistan to encourage changes in their policies regarding women's rights. However, the results of the UN's efforts so far have been limited. The Taliban has remained in its position and has shown no signs of substantially lifting the ban on education for

women. The complexity of the situation in Afghanistan and the Taliban's uncompromising attitude pose a major challenge in the fight for women's right to education in the country. However, continued international engagement and pressure remain important to keep this issue in the world's attention and drive gradual change. The UN needs to continue to play a central role in diplomacy, monitoring, and aid delivery, while engaging stronger support from its member states to pressure the Taliban government to respect the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, including the right to education.

REFERENCES

- Adlini, M. N. (2024). Tarbiatuna: Journal of Islamic Education Studies. *Tarbiatuna: Journal of Islamic Education Studies*, 4(1), 52–63.
- Amanda Putri, N. G., Dea Avita, F., & Vindi Putri, H. J. (2024). Perlindungan Hak Asasi Manusia Dalam Konteks Hukum. *Indonesian Journal Of Legality Of Law*, 1(2), 1–13.
- Argenti, G., Dhiaulhaq, S., Pramesti, A., Ronggowaluyo, J. H., Timur, T., & Karawang, K. (2023). Perspektif PBB Mengenai Pelanggaran Human Security Perempuan Oleh Taliban 2021. *Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan, Januari, 1*, 581–592. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.755405>

- 5
- Arhanudya, R. C., Anwar, S., & Hadisancoko, R. E. (2023). Kontribusi Indonesia Dalam Operasi Pemeliharaan Perdamaian Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa (Pbb. *Community Development Journal: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 4(4), 9406–9410.
<http://journal.universitaspahlawan.ac.id/index.php/cdj/article/view/20551>
- Haack, K., Karns, M. P., & Murray, J. (2020). *Figure 1 Percentage of Women in Professional Staff in the UN Secretariat 1971-1990*. 132(March 1950).
- Haikal Mubarak, Songgi Mardiansah, Manurung, A., & Hadi Purnomo. (2024). International Legal Protection of Child Soldiers in Areas of Armed Conflict. *Formosa Journal of Sustainable Research*, 3(4), 875–884.
<https://doi.org/10.55927/fjsr.v3i4.8959>
- Kamruzzaman, P., Williams, K., Wardak, A., Kabir, M. E., & Ayobi, Y. (2022). Exploring dignity in the context of displacement—evidence from Rohingya in Bangladesh and IDPs in Afghanistan. *Third World Quarterly*, 43(8), 1854–1874.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2022.2074387>
- Kusnadi, K., & Wulandari, N. A. T. (2024). Pendidikan Damai: Memperkuat Pemahaman Hak Asasi Manusia Dan Keadilan Sosial. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 8(1), 539–551.
<https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v8i1.7126>
- Maley, W., & Jamal, A. S. (2022). Diplomacy of Disaster: The Afghanistan “Peace Process” and the Taliban Occupation of Kabul. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 10(1), 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1871191X-bja10089>
- Maria Margaretha, C., Safa, M., Dzikra, A., & Azizah Salsabiila, S. (2024). *Penanganan Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Manusia dalam Hukum Internasional oleh Perserikatan Bangsa Bangsa*. 5624(1), 176–195.
<http://jurnal.kolibi.org/index.php/kultura>
- Masruroh, H. (2022). *Diplomasi Indonesia Dalam Memperpanjang United Nations Assistance*.
- Nabila Riani, & Andi Aina Ilmih. (2024). Membangun Tembok Perlindungan Hak Asasi Manusia di Era Kejahatan Lintas Negara. *ALADALAH: Jurnal Politik, Sosial, Hukum Dan Humaniora*, 2(4), 25–35.
<https://doi.org/10.59246/aladalah.v2i4.930>
- Rahmawati, R., Nur, P., F, A., Maulana, M. I., Heriansyah, H., & Andrianto, I. (2021). Hak Asasi Manusia dan Diplomasi Kemanusiaan. *Human Rights and Humanitarian Diplomacy*.
- Saleem Mazhar, M., & Goraya, N. S. (2020). *Afghan Women Education*:

- Bottlenecks & Future. In *A Research Journal of South Asian Studies* 47 *South Asian Studies A Research Journal of South Asian Studies* (Vol. 35, Issue 1). <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/education>
- Sanders, C. K., & Scanlon, E. (2021). The Digital Divide Is a Human Rights Issue: Advancing Social Inclusion Through Social Work Advocacy. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, 6(2), 130–143. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-020-00147-9>
- Santoso, G., Abdulkarim, A., Maftuh, B., Sapriya, & Murod, M. (2023). Kajian keikutsertaan Indonesia dalam Organisasi Internasional untuk Perdamaian Dunia di Abad 21. *Jurnal Pendidikan Transformatif (Jupetra)*, 02(01), 157–170.
- Sevastik, P. (2020). Rule of Law, Human Rights and Impunity: The Case of Afghanistan. In *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law* (Vol. 12, Issue 1). Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40803-019-00089-z>
- Tsabitah Rizqi Ekanoviarini, & Aji Wibowo. (2022). Pelanggaran Hak Perempuan Di Afghanistan Selama Kekuasaan Rezim Taliban Berdasarkan Konvensi Cedaw. *Reformasi Hukum Trisakti*, 4(4), 715–728. <https://doi.org/10.25105/refor.v4i4.14097>
- Wittrock, J. (2022). *Women's Education in Afghanistan*.
- World Bank. (2024). *Diplomacy and Development*.
- Zhafir, A. Z. T., Situmeang, N., & Nasir, A. K. (2024). Relevansi Feminisme Dalam Isu Kontemporer: Kehadiran Un Women Dalam Pemberdayaan Perempuan Dan Manusia Di Afghanistan. *Mandala: Jurnal Ilmu Hubungan Internasional*, 7(1), 104–121.