

VISION 2025

STRATEGIC PLAN



پوهنتون کاردان
KARDAN UNIVERSITY

EXCELLENCE & GROWTH

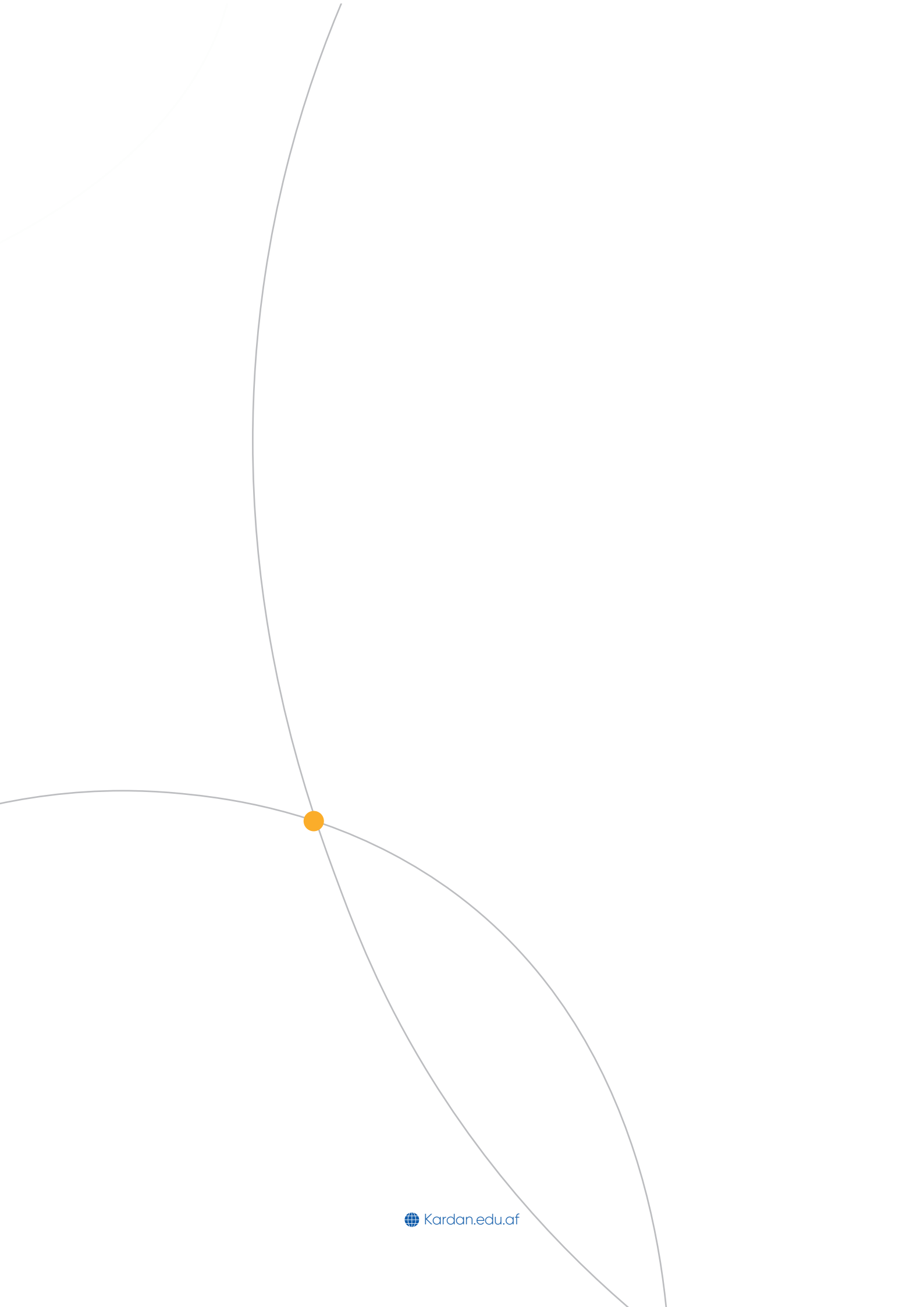


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VISION

What do we aspire to achieve at Kardan University?

In the spirit of excellence, aspiring for
knowledge and growth

MISSION

What is our purpose at Kardan University?

A vibrant university, inspiring academic
and professional excellence

VALUES

What is important to us?

Our community believes in five core values that guide the behaviors of our people and reflect our commitment to achieving excellence and growth. Each of these values is chosen by our community and is reflected in everything we do as a value-driven institution.

EXCELLENCE

We will consistently nurture outstanding ideas and initiatives in order to help our community achieve academic and professional excellence.

We will demonstrate a commitment to being the best in the higher education sector and to delivering exceptional programs and services.

COLLABORATION

By working together and encouraging teamwork, we will support our community to achieve the vision and mission of the institution.

We will celebrate collaborative work among our students, alumni, faculty and staff as the hallmark of our institutional success.

INTEGRITY

We will adhere to the highest professional and ethical standards in everything we do.

We will act with integrity and commit ourselves to an open and transparent teaching, learning and work environment.

PEOPLE

Our people are our most vital assets, who are critical actors in shaping our strategic direction.

We will invest in the well-being, intellectual growth, and professional development of our people, especially our students, alumni, staff, and faculty.

INNOVATION

We are committed to ushering in new technologies, new ideas, and new possibilities to deliver the best solutions to our community.

We will consistently strive to be recognized as an innovative community – exploring new possibilities passionately, creatively, and purposefully.

OUR CORE VALUES

FROM THE CHANCELLOR

I am proud to present the second Strategic Plan for Kardan University, which outlines our future ambitions and strategic commitments through 2025.

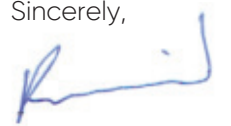
I announce this strategy amid the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the progression of a fragile peace process in Afghanistan. Despite the persistence of intractable challenges and an uncertain road ahead, this plan is a testament to the dedication and perseverance of our community. We have articulated a bold, clear and ambitious strategy for the next five years recognizing that our community will rise to the challenge with determination and confidence.

This forward-thinking plan is comprised of our vision, mission, values, strategic objectives and strategic initiatives for the years 2021-2025 developed through an inclusive and participatory approach over the past year. With this planning effort completed, we will move forward to develop detailed implementation plans across the University, supported by the Strategic Planning Taskforce.

This planning effort demonstrates Kardan University's vision of excellence, our unrelenting pursuit of innovation in the higher education sector and our continued ascent as a leading university in Afghanistan. We remain committed to ensuring that our strategic commitments and ambitions are realized with passion, dedication, and comprehensive transparency over the next five years.

I am immensely grateful to the Strategic Planning Taskforce, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and our strategic partners for their invaluable insights and contributions throughout this planning effort. With the implementation of this bold and ambitious plan, I am confident that there is no limit to what we can achieve together at Kardan University. It is with much excitement and optimism that I look forward to working with each of you over the next five years to realize Vision 2025.

Sincerely,



Roeeen Rahmani
Chancellor



“This planning effort demonstrates Kardan University’s vision of excellence, our unrelenting pursuit of innovation in the higher education sector and our continued ascent as a leading university in Afghanistan.”

INTRODUCTION

Our future is increasingly being shaped by unprecedented geopolitical, socio-economic, and technological forces, requiring universities to adapt, innovate and collaborate on a global scale.

Considering the ever-increasing complexities around the economic, demographic and policy imperatives, it is essential for Kardan University to respond proactively and strategically to the changing environmental conditions in Afghanistan. As the country's first and leading private university, Kardan University requires the articulation of a broader vision of excellence underscoring academic and professional pre-eminence as the cornerstone of its strategic direction. This plan will provide a framework in which to define our shared objectives and strategic commitments.

Following the successful completion of Kardan University's inaugural strategic plan, the second strategic plan sets out our overarching framework of significant priorities and commitments for the years 2021–2025. This strategy has been developed in consultation with our key stakeholders – namely, students, alumni, staff, faculty, and strategic partners who will continue to be key to its effective implementation.

The strategic planning process is led by the University's Strategic Planning Taskforce (PTF) under the leadership of Chancellor Roheen Rahmani. The PTF brings together University leaders, managers, faculty members and staff to articulate and oversee a robust strategic direction for the University over the next five years.

Under the direction of the PTF, Kardan University's teams will work collaboratively to integrate our key stakeholders' perspectives into the strategic planning processes, ensuring participatory and inclusive engagement at the assessment, planning, execution, and continuous improvement phases.

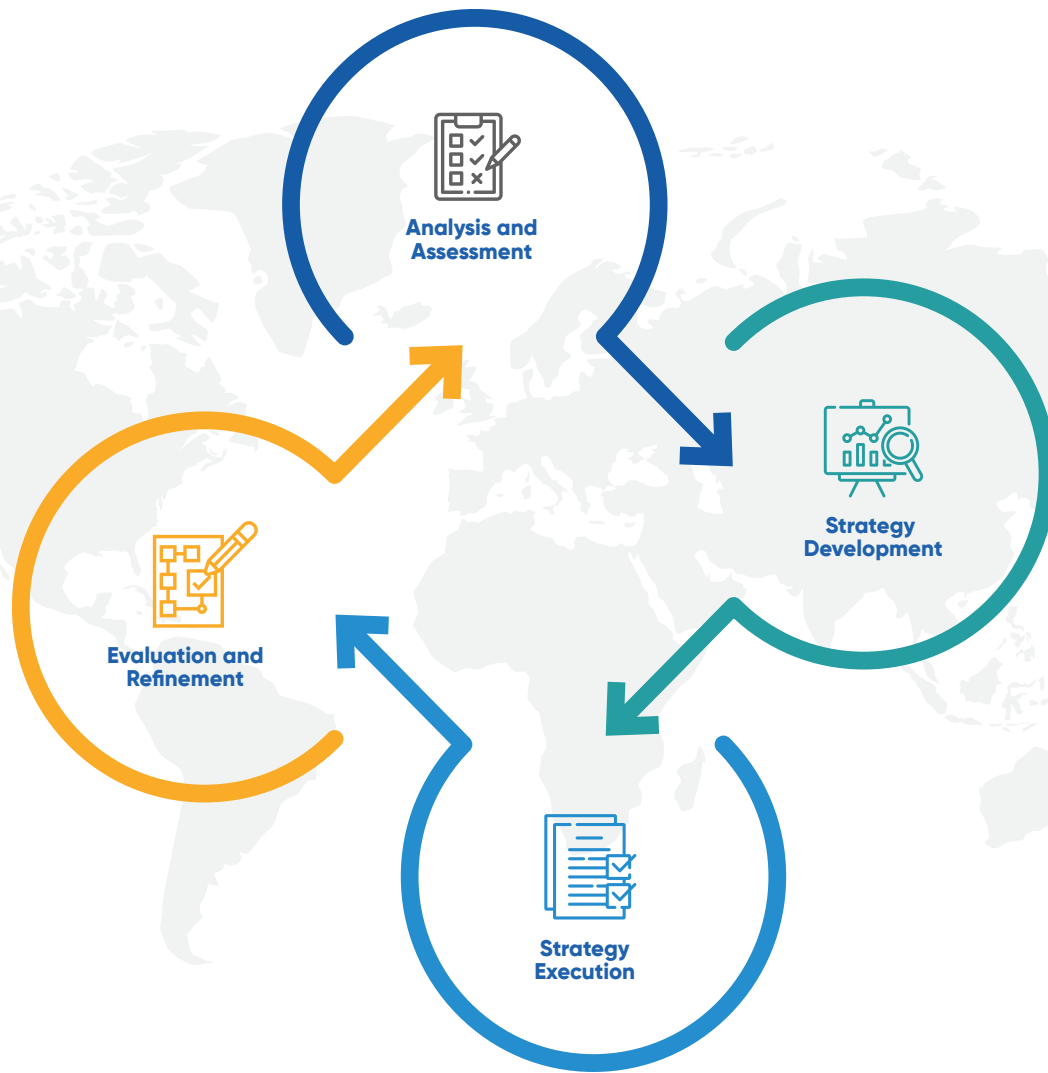
Further, we will advance a unified stakeholder engagement model and common language in order to promote the exchange of constructive ideas and facilitate the adoption of effective practices as part of our strategic planning process. Over the next five years, the PTF will continue to meet regularly to review, assess and evaluate

the departmental plans, initiatives and their contributions towards the University's overarching strategic plan.

The strategic objectives, commitments and initiatives outlined in this document are the key pillars of the strategic plan. They are deliberately designed as high-level statements since the University departments and offices will subsequently develop their detailed operational plans based on these overarching plans. Some of the strategic elements are department-focused while others reflect the entire University's ecosystem with overlaps across the units, departments, and offices. As we embark upon the strategy implementation period, we will publish the details of all strategic plan updates and modifications online through Kardan University's website and social media channels. Please visit kardan.edu.af/vision2025 to learn more about our strategic plan updates, progress, and major milestones.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Beginning with the formation of the Strategic Planning Taskforce (PTF) under the leadership of Chancellor Roeeen Rahmani in early 2020, the strategic planning process was initiated through a collaborative and inclusive engagement with the University's internal and external stakeholders. The planning process comprises four distinctive phases: Analysis and Assessment; Strategy Development; Strategy Execution and Evaluation and Refinement.



Strategic Planning Process: Engaging the entire campus community to boldly shape the future of Kardan University through consultation, creativity, imagination and determination.

Analysis and Assessment

With a focus on scanning the field, this phase focused on building knowledge on trends, best practices, existing initiatives and gaps in the University's inaugural strategic plan. Furthermore, the PTF strived to build internal and external stakeholder buy-in through targeted initiatives such as focus group discussions, consultative meetings, surveys, and interviews.

The University's strategic planning teams conducted internal and external assessments using the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and Political, Economic, Social and Technological (PEST) methods to assess and analyze our stakeholder perceptions towards Kardan University's impact and future direction.

This strategic assessment phase was critical to the overall strategic planning process as it enabled the University to position itself in a larger landscape and clarify its unique value-added within a complex higher education landscape, including the strategic direction of the Ministry of Higher Education.

Strategy Development

In formulating its long-term strategy as a continual process of development, the University carefully examined the changing environment and selected the strategic objectives that were consistent with the University's mission, vision and growth ambitions. Following the internal and external needs assessment, the identification and selection of the strategic objectives were developed and communicated to the Kardan University community through consultative workshops, meetings, and focused group discussions so that all stakeholders feel empowered and responsible for realizing these strategic commitments and objectives.

Strategy Execution

Kardan University is committed to turning the identified strategies into reality through a well-defined strategic management approach. Kardan University will ensure that strategy is driven from the top down through a coherent and integrated linkage between units and departments.

As strategic initiatives are implemented and the context changes, performance information will move from the bottom up and inform change management and decision-making.

The PTF will meet regularly to review the overall progress of the strategic planning process and offer guidance to the teams across the University, ensuring consistent relevance, effectiveness, and adaptability of the strategic plan over the next five years.

Evaluation and Refinement

Kardan University will consistently and systematically measure performance feedback against strategic objectives and initiatives using the key performance metrics and a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan.

As the PTF serves as the overarching control and oversight mechanism for the strategy, it will regularly require leaders and managers across the University to report on their performance, ensuring the effective development and implementation of a robust monitoring, reporting, and evaluation mechanism.



As part of the strategic planning process, Kardan University's internal and external stakeholders identified advancing academic expansion and excellence, student and alumni success, research excellence, brand identity, and institutional development as fundamental strategic priorities over the next five years.



STATISTICS AND FACTS

10

Consultative workshops and listening sessions with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners.

26

Members of the Strategic Planning Taskforce, with a representation of faculty and staff from across the University.

76

Members of strategic objectives and values workshops responsible for the review and approval of the organizational values and strategic objectives for the next five years.

6

Strategic Planning Taskforce meetings held to review the progress on strategic planning design and formulation.

12

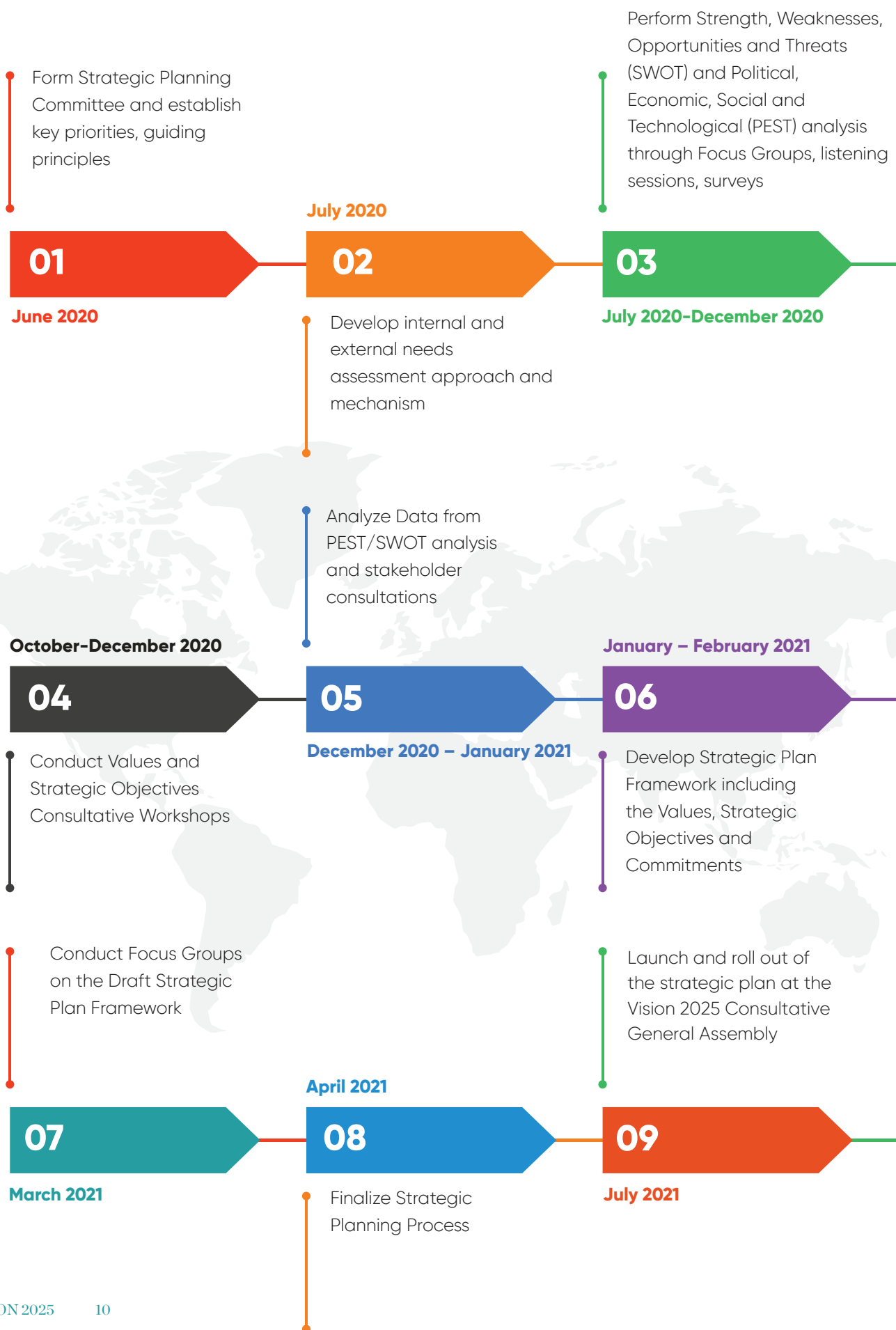
Months as the period to collect input and feedback from Kardan University's community about the strategic objectives, values, and strategic initiatives.



“Kardan University will embrace the future challenges and opportunities by building on its strengths. We will manage change and guide our future growth by honoring our pioneering history. We will be bold and determined in our ambitions, ensuring that Kardan University continues to thrive as a vibrant, innovative, and dynamic institution.”

Roeen Rahmani
Chancellor

STRATEGIC PLANNING MILESTONES



ACADEMIC EXPANSION AND EXCELLENCE

To broaden the range of academic programs with a focus on excellence in teaching and learning

Despite the noticeable achievements, the higher education sector in Afghanistan faces significant challenges, including lack of quality, accessibility, capacity building, and market-driven higher education programs, as highlighted in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF II) 2021-2025. Furthermore, Afghanistan's total tertiary education gross enrolment ratio of 9.7 percent represents one of the lowest indicators in the world (UNESCO, 2018). In such a challenging context, there is a demonstrated need for increased and high-quality academic programs as primary drivers of innovation, entrepreneurship and economic resiliency amid rapid technological change.

Given the changing market requirements and national demand for new academic disciplines, Kardan University is uniquely positioned to expand its degree programs by launching new undergraduate and graduate programs. The need for the expansion of academic programs was validated and underscored during a comprehensive range of focus group discussions, interviews, and surveys conducted with students, alumni, and industry partners in 2020.

These assessments indicated that while there exists a significant demand for master-level programs, there is a growing demand in the market for new and innovative undergraduate programs in national priority areas such as the environmental sciences, supply chain management, teacher education, and medical sciences. Consequently, there is a demonstrated need to further expand the current academic programs in order to address the market and workforce requirements while effectively contributing towards the socio-economic development priorities in Afghanistan.

To this end, Kardan University will need to significantly expand access to a portfolio of high-quality academic programs that meet the human capital development priorities in Afghanistan.

This expansion may include degree programs, certificate programs, executive education programs, and customized academic offerings to meet the workforce needs across the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

As new academic disciplines and initiatives are launched, Kardan University will simultaneously strengthen its staff and institutional capacities to increase student enrolment by the year 2025 through targeted, innovative and systematic outreach initiatives across Kabul and the provinces. The growth in student numbers will be supplemented by the increased investments in attracting top faculty talent, and an enhanced learning and teaching environment including world-class infrastructure, cutting edge student services and facilities. Through the design and delivery of innovative and market-oriented academic programs for the next generation of prospective students, Kardan University will reassert its ascent as a leading provider of undergraduate, graduate, and professional education programs in Afghanistan.

Strategic Commitments

SO1.1 Design and deliver new market-driven degree programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

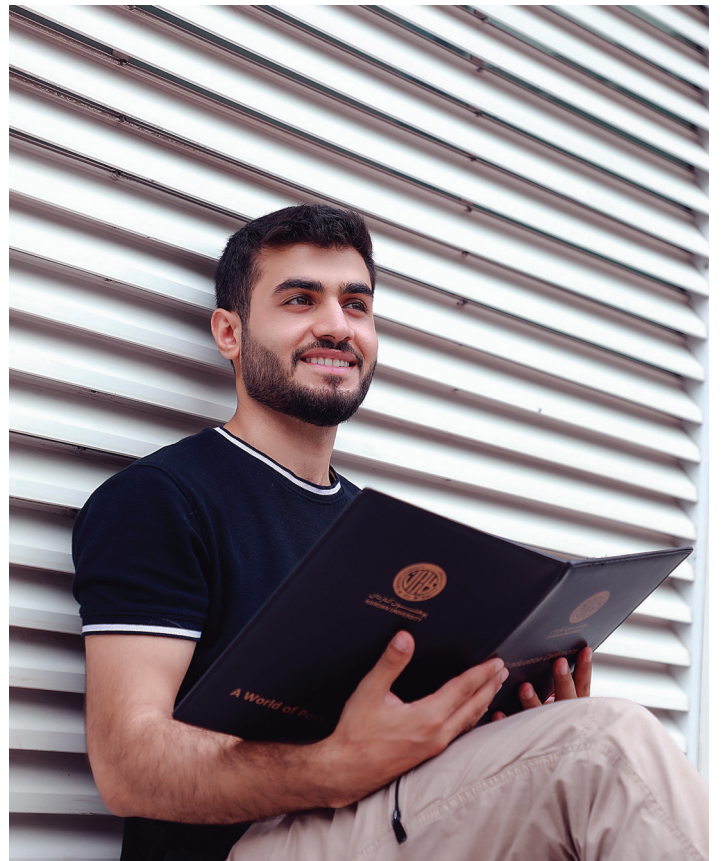
SO1.2 Develop and implement best practices for the recruitment, development and retention of faculty who have demonstrated commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.

SO1.3 Enhance and invest in innovation in the areas of teaching and learning excellence.

SO1.4 Leverage public and private partnerships to offer a wide range of new undergraduate, graduate and professional development programs.



Through the design and delivery of innovative and market-oriented academic programs for the next generation of prospective students, Kardan University will reassert its ascent as a leading provider of undergraduate, graduate, and professional education programs in Afghanistan.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

STUDENT AND ALUMNI SUCCESS

To attract and retain the best students and maximize their potential with a focus on enhanced student and alumni success programs and initiatives

Every year, around 200,000 high school graduates register for Afghanistan's nationwide university examination, also known as Kankor, with an estimated 40% of those who pass the examination enrolling at private universities, according to the National Examination Authority (NExA). In addition, an increasing number of high school graduates aged between 18–23 apply to the private universities directly given a multiplicity of factors, including lack of enrolment capacity at public universities, high-quality education at selected private universities, diversity of market-oriented academic programs, and employment prospects after graduation, according to the MoHE strategic plan.

Over the next five years, Kardan University will continue to assess the higher education trends and develop responsive strategies to enroll promising talents from both the Kankor platform and high schools across the country. Beyond the delivery of traditional marketing and enrolment strategies, we will re-define our student enrolment strategies emphasizing greater faculty involvement, stakeholder relations, high school outreach initiatives, digital media, and innovative public engagement activities.

We will create strategic enrolment plans that will guide our collective efforts and decision-making on enrolment emphasizing a culture of student service excellence, an enhanced approach towards promoting access and entrance to the University as well as improved cross-functional coordination on enrolment. In addition to ensuring rigorous academic standards in the classrooms, Kardan University has contributed towards the students' professional development through the establishment of Student Success Center – a unique and holistic platform offering students and

alumni with lifelong and co/extra-curricular development opportunities, including but not limited to student clubs and societies, job placement and career development services, alumni development initiatives, national and international competitions, and industry engagement. This balanced approach towards student and alumni development has resulted in increased demand for Kardan University graduates in the market demonstrated by an estimated 88% graduate employment rate, as per the impact assessment conducted for the years 2014–2018.

Over the next five years, we will continue to invest in and enhance our student and alumni success programs with an emphasis on improved teaching and learning standards, research contributions, industry immersion and professional development initiatives. As such, we will invest in innovative and impactful initiatives such as mentorship, fundraising, networking, national and international competitions, student support services, career development pathways, and a diverse range of corporate sponsorship opportunities. We will ensure the strategic development of an enabling environment where our alumni and students can thrive and excel nationally and globally.

Strategic Commitments

SO2.1 Develop and implement enhanced strategic enrolment initiatives and best practices for the recruitment and retention of best students from diverse backgrounds.

SO2.2 Increase the student engagement in high-impact co/extra-curricular programs, emphasizing exposure to national and international perspectives, best practices and networks, especially regional and international competitions.

SO2.3 Invest in enhanced career readiness programs and initiatives, especially through digital solutions, public and private partnerships and value-added career services, ensuring increased employment opportunities for students and alumni.

Over the next five years, we will significantly enhance our student and alumni success programs with an emphasis on improved teaching and learning standards, research contributions, industry immersion and professional development initiatives.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

To promote research excellence through knowledge generation, dissemination, and impact

Kardan University has made achieving research excellence a fundamental strategic priority as demonstrated through the establishment and strengthening of the Department of Research and Development.

As a research-oriented academic institution, Kardan University has dedicated research capabilities as demonstrated through the publication of ISSN-registered academic journals, formation of a Research Society mobilizing national and international researchers, facilitation of faculty's research publications in leading international journals, as well as provision of research grants, symposia, and conferences.

From Kankor examination reform to achieving the sustainability development goals and boosting the national economy in collaboration with the industry partners, Kardan University's researchers continue to examine and help tackle some of the most complex socio-economic challenges in Afghanistan. Over the next five years, we will further strengthen our research capabilities in order to promote a culture of research and effectively contribute towards the development of a knowledge-based economy in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, we will make increased investments towards publishing textbooks including teaching and learning resources to address the significant gap in the availability and accessibility of effective and relevant educational books and resources in Afghanistan.

Strategic Commitments

SO3.1 Invest in the development of increased high quality and international standard research conducted across multiple disciplines, aligned with local, national, and international priorities.

SO3.2 Leverage Kardan University's research and development capabilities to generate research impact, contributing to local and national socio-economic development.

SO3.3 Increase investments in research and development capabilities through enhanced research grants, capacity building programs, and public private partnerships.

SO3.4 Develop staff and institutional capacities to become a premier provider of learning and teaching resources, products and services for the higher education sector focusing on content generation and publishing.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

BRAND IDENTITY

To elevate Kardan University's brand identity through the development of enduring commitments and lifelong relationships

As Afghanistan's first and leading private University, Kardan University has consistently cultivated a positive brand identity that fosters feelings of belonging, pride and trust among our current and prospective students, employees, alumni, and strategic partners. By advancing academic and professional excellence, Kardan University has consistently distinguished itself as a leading brand in Afghanistan.

Over the next five years, we will invest further in building lifelong relationships with our community through a systematic focus on elevating Kardan University's brand. As a brand of choice, we are further committed to increasing our community support and engagement efforts while leading the way in creating societal impact and achieving academic excellence. Our intent in pursuing this strategic objective is to ensure that Kardan University can break out of the "sea of sameness" in the higher education sector and capitalize on our community's sense of pride towards Kardan University. To achieve this objective, we will make significant investments in key growth areas such as recruitment and enrollment, student and alumni success and academic reputation. A key focus of this priority will be on strengthening our systems to better advance our brand identity including the introduction of contemporary technologies and innovative approaches. Furthermore, we will seek creative ways to strengthen our national and international collaborations with the public, private and non-profit sectors, ensuring the development of enduring relationships with these partners for an inspiring and sustainable future.

Strategic Commitments

SO4.1 Design and deliver an integrated brand experience striving for consistent representation and delivery across the marketing and communication channels.

SO4.2 Invest in and foster a vibrant community life among students, alumni, staff, and faculty, contributing to a sustained sense of belonging and pride towards Kardan University.

SO4.3 Excel in national and international rankings ensuring the consistent ascent of the University as an industry leader and trailblazer.

SO4.4 Continue to develop national and international collaborations to demonstrate the University's academic excellence and societal impact across the country.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To invest in and develop a thriving campus while strengthening staff, faculty and institutional capacities

As an innovative and growth-oriented industry leader, Kardan University is renowned for its ability to respond to the evolving higher education requirements and deliver high-quality academic and professional programs aligned with the national priorities. Over the next five years, we remain committed to creating an enabling environment where growth will be embraced and institutionalized across the University's ecosystem including academic affairs and professional services. The strategic growth commitments will be designed and delivered twofold. First, Kardan University requires the development of a permanent, custom-built campus that effectively responds to our strategic commitments, sustainability imperatives and future growth-focused ambitions. Securing a permanent and custom-built campus for Kardan University continues to be one of the most fundamental strategic priorities as originally reflected in the Vision of Excellence (2015–2020), our inaugural five-year strategic plan.

The current campus environment characterized by leased buildings and limited teaching and learning facilities is unsustainable, increasingly hindering the University's provision of high-quality academic and professional services. What is more, the current campuses negatively affect Kardan University's ability to innovate, expand, and deliver world-class professional and academic services. By investing in the development of a permanent campus, Kardan University will be uniquely positioned not only to achieve its five-year strategic objectives but will lead the higher education sector as a result of increased innovative and market-oriented academic programs and services.

Second, as the campus development initiative represents a significant institutional expansion, there will be a need to simultaneously align the institutional systems and strengthen our staff and institutional capacities to meet the growth priorities.

Through a comprehensive system development framework, we will enhance our administrative and academic systems, policies, and procedures to meet the new campus requirements and growth imperatives. In addition to effective system development, we will continue to attract top talent in our academic and professional units and develop their capacities through the design and implementation of robust strategic initiatives. We will re-examine our human resource strategies to ensure that our current systems and approaches remain relevant, responsive, and effective to meet future needs.

By developing a custom-built campus and focusing on staff and institutional development in tandem, Kardan University will be able to usher in a new era of excellence in higher education and effectively compete with reputable universities nationally and internationally.

Strategic Commitments

SO5.1 Build and offer to Kardan University's community a world-class teaching and learning environment demonstrated through a new and custom-built campus.

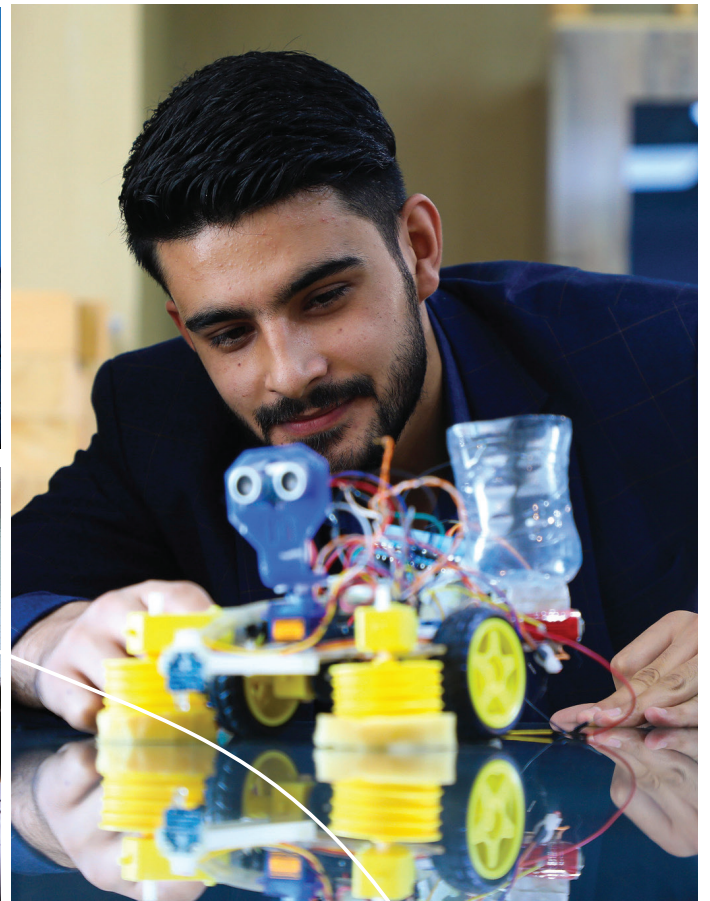
SO5.2 Continue to attract, recruit and retain top talents while providing a supportive and rewarding work environment for faculty and staff.

SO5.3 Invest in increased career development opportunities for staff and faculty, contributing to the development of an inclusive, diverse and talented community of professional cadre across the University.

SO5.4 Develop and implement responsive and accountable policies and procedures, ensuring systematic digitalization and compliance with the applicable national and international laws.



By developing a custom-built campus and focusing on staff and institutional development in tandem, Kardan University will be able to usher in a new era of excellence in higher education and effectively compete with the reputable universities nationally and internationally.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Strategic Initiative I: Centers of Excellence

To design and develop high impact initiatives including the formation of Centers of Excellence that respond to the evolving market needs and national development priorities

Kardan University is uniquely positioned to contribute knowledge and expertise towards the sectoral and national development priorities given its leadership role in the higher education sector. The establishment of Kardan University's Center for Higher Education Development (CHED) advancing research, innovation, and higher education reform is a case in point. As part of its new strategy, Kardan University

envisions designing and delivering additional high-impact initiatives that tackle significant developmental gaps across the public, private, and non-profit sectors over the next five years. Building on its success in higher education administration and leadership, Kardan University intends to establish niche Centers of Excellence in targeted fields (e.g., higher education, capacity development, technology) where we have demonstrated strength and leadership.

These interventions will support the development of responsive and effective national institutions while enabling the University to meet its funding and financial sustainability priorities. By responding to the market needs, Kardan University will be able to reassert its industry lead, address national development priorities and advance our institutional competitiveness and relevance over the next five years.



Strategic Initiative II: Kardan Foundation

To establish the Kardan Foundation as an integral part of Kardan University to advance a knowledge society and contribute to the prosperity of communities across Afghanistan

Kardan University is the first academic institution in Afghanistan to be recognized by the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (2020) for our sustainable development impact in Afghanistan. Since Kardan University was founded in 2002, we have addressed societal needs and market demands by linking Kardan University's work with the broader socio-economic context in Afghanistan as part of a coherent institutional framework, including the

establishment of Kardan University's Sustainability Office. As part of our societal commitments, we have sponsored mobile libraries and national and international sports competitions, offered scholarships and financial assistance opportunities to thousands of promising youths, and supported diverse charitable causes as well as created thousands of internship and employment opportunities. Given the significance of these societal contributions, there is a need to streamline and consolidate our

strategic impact initiatives through the establishment of the Kardan Foundation. This long-standing strategic commitment, as originally reflected in our Vision of Excellence (2015–2020), will become our primary vehicle through which we will create societal impact. The Kardan Foundation will ultimately serve as a pioneering initiative that will inspire other universities across Afghanistan to institutionalize philanthropic and service-focused work as part of their core mission.



PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

The Strategic Planning Taskforce (PTF) will measure progress against this Strategy using a robust monitoring and evaluation framework primarily through monitoring, evaluation and reporting against five key performance indicators:

KPI 1 Academic Expansion

Metrics that track the quality of teaching and learning including the recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty and staff

KPI 2 Student and Alumni Success

Metrics that track student recruitment, engagement, retention, and graduate employment

KPI 3 Research Excellence

Metrics that track our research performance, partnerships, and impact

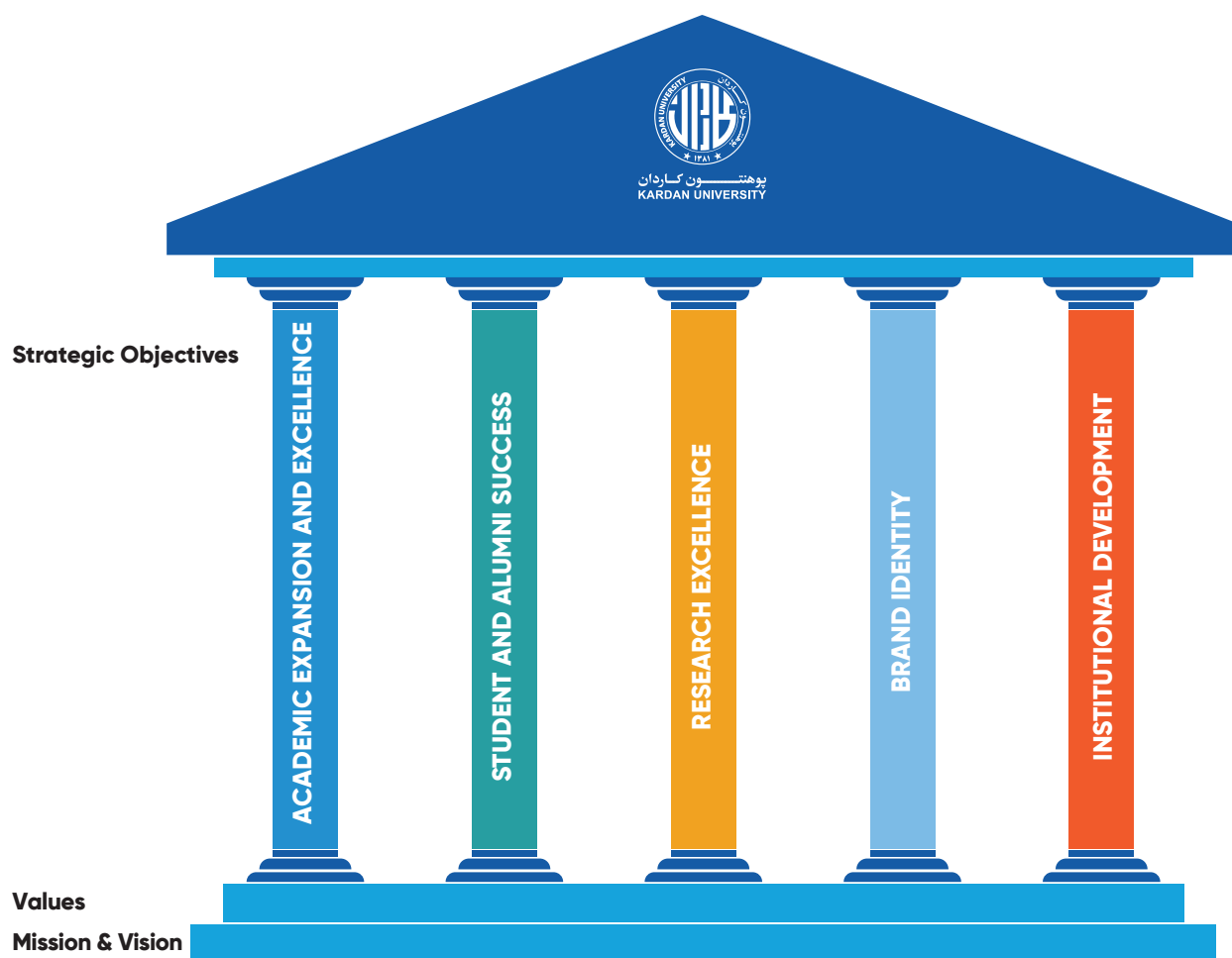
KPI 4 Brand Identity

Metrics that track our enhanced existing identity in the social world through the application of effective digital and creative public engagement tools and strategies

KPI 5 Institutional Development

Metrics that track the development of a responsive and effective campus environment with robust staff and institutional capabilities

VISION 2025 SUMMARY



MISSION

A vibrant university, inspiring academic and professional excellence

VISION

In the spirit of excellence, aspiring for knowledge and growth

VALUES

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Collaboration
- People

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Strategic Initiative I:
Centers of Excellence

Strategic Initiative II:
Kardan Foundation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This plan was developed through a collaboration with the Kardan University's community. The Strategic Planning Taskforce wishes to thank the University's internal and external stakeholders for their engagement and support.

Chancellor Roeen Rahmani

Chair

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Focal Point for the Strategic Planning Process

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KARDAN UNIVERSITY

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