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Afghanistan is a nation located in the Middle East Region. This country has been under a number of governing bodies ranging from King Khan in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, to Russian and British occupation until recently Taliban forces and currently ~~armed~~ western armed forces maintaining peace. For a nation which has experienced such turbulent times and has been taken advantage of for resources and their strategic location, ~~that~~ there has been countless inequalities forced upon its people.

One main area in which a substantial amount of inequalities have arisen is Gender. Afghanistan is an Islamic Republic where 80% are Sunni Muslims and 19% are Shariat Muslims. The fact that 99% of the population follows this religion is a commonality but it is through the varying interpretations ~~where~~ where differences occur.

One group that has a varying interpretation is the Taliban. Consisting of Sunni-Muslim Pashtuns, this group garnered power after the Russian left this nation in a state of disaster. The Taliban, upon their ~~advance~~ advance to power forcefully and "legally" enacted laws that

discriminated against gender or ~~race~~<sup>ethnicity</sup>. One example is the law that women could not leave their house unless they were accompanied by a male relative and that women were forced to cover all sections of their body with a niqab, a cloth placed over the body with ~~to~~ only a slit for eyesight. By doing so, they severely restricted the freedom of women to do or venture outside of their homes, thus the Taliban and the niqab became symbols of oppression to the Western ~~world~~ society. <sup>Although women are less restricted nowadays,</sup> the niqab and hijab have become tradition and a social norm within Afghan society.

Another aspect that brought about inequality is location. In Afghanistan, the terrain is vastly different in the 3 major regions; Southern Plateau, Northern Highlands and Central region. In Kabul, the capital city of Afghanistan, the Socially Valuable Resources which are now present allow the people that inhabit the city to access education, health and basic needs. Girls in the city frequently go to school, <sup>although</sup> ~~but~~ literacy rates are lower than boys. Women in the cities also work freely, especially as volunteers but their counterparts in rural regions do not get to have such freedom.

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In the rural regions, where tribes and clans are severely evident, the rule of the Taliban continues to reign. The power of tribal leaders far outweighs the power and authority of the Afghanistan government, led by Hamid Karzai, has in such regions. With such inequalities evident, the <sup>negative</sup> impacts may result in the downfall of the little order ~~that~~ <sup>this</sup> nation has already and the rule of the Taliban ~~to repeat~~ <sup>to repeat</sup> itself.

If SVR's aren't established in the long term in rural regions, the nation's mortality rates, poverty rates and literacy rates will continue to increase. Although the current government is trying to increase female participation within all aspects, particularly the government, the view of individual families may still be that the female should remain at home.

This view is part of the Islam ideology as it is only <sup>acceptable</sup> ~~okay~~ for a woman to work or volunteer in the community if her household duties are met, it won't compromise her faith and has the permission of her husband. This inequality may be viewed lightly or radically because the Quran also allows women and men to outline their

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② "marriage conditions" prior to getting married thus the woman may restrict her husband's rights or her own responsibilities. ~~This belief~~ This philosophy was presented many years prior to Western beliefs viewed women as equals.

With such negative impacts upon health, the ~~female~~ ~~expected~~ expected female age is 43.4. With the continual violence and conflict which has been going on for decades, the population rate of men is significantly lower than females due to casualties and death.

The impacts of the existing inequalities that Afghanistan suffer, if maintained will result in a nation that is unable to help themselves in any aspect. With such a nation possible to exist, the world under its UN obligations are responsible to <sup>at least</sup> attempt to try and place ~~the~~ the nation and its people back on their feet and try to establish a nation of which its people receive adequate access to SVR's and are able to achieve their full potential and human rights.