

PRESS RELEASE

United Nations Development Programme

Afghanistan Country Office, Shah Mahmood Ghazi Watt, Kabul



International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women Marked in Herat

November 25, 2009, Herat-- International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was marked today in a ceremony by Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA) of Herat province and UNDP Gender Equality Project in joint collaboration with Afghan Independent Human Right Commission (AIHRC), Municipality, Governor's Office and Civic Society Organizations (CSOs).

Herat Governor and Chief Provincial Prosecutor expressed their serious concerns on the current situation of women in Herat and serious consequences of violence against women. They reiterated that Herat provincial leadership is committed to set gender equality and protection of women as a priority but strongly urge the women movement, human rights organizations, media, and women themselves to struggle towards elimination of violence against women.



While a network of 250 Religious and Community Leaders was established and trained on women's rights by UNDP, DoWA and DoHRA, Herat Governor also emphasized on the important role of religious and community leaders and mentioned he will be using all possible means to ensure these leaders are actively engaged in this process.

This event provided a good opportunity to announce the provincial government officials and decision makers' commitment to assist the fight against violence and engage media and civil society to join the campaign.

Meanwhile UNDP Gender Equality Project together with the Department of Women's Affairs and Herat gender working group members inaugurated a one month leadership training programme for some 30 young women from media, CSOs, universities and schools in Herat province yesterday.

The training will be conducted jointly by UNDP Gender Equality Project, Department of Women's Affairs, Department of Hajj & Religious Affairs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to help develop the leadership potential of female decision makers in order to enhance women's security in terms of social, economic and psychological wellbeing; also, to address the current low level of women's participation in various ranks of economic, social, political and public decision-making.

By the end of one month training programme, trainees will serve one month internship in Department of Women's Affairs units in order to gain practical experience. (Ends)

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