

Institutional Capacity Building for Gender Equality (GEP)

2007 – 2013



Gender equality is a cross-cutting issue that all UNDP Afghanistan's projects worked toward. GEP is a gender-specific project that helps to provide Afghan women with equal opportunities by engendering national policies and local capacity building.

Kabul Communiqué Focus Area

Gender & Children's Rights

Proposed Budget

\$3.1 mil USD

Resources*

\$1.3 mil USD

Implementing Partners

Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA)

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

Ministry of Economy (MoEc)

Ministry of Finance (MoF)

Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs (MoHRA)

Ministry of Justice (MoJ)

Afghanistan Independent Human Rights

Commission (AIHRC)

Central Statistics Office (CSO)

Kabul University

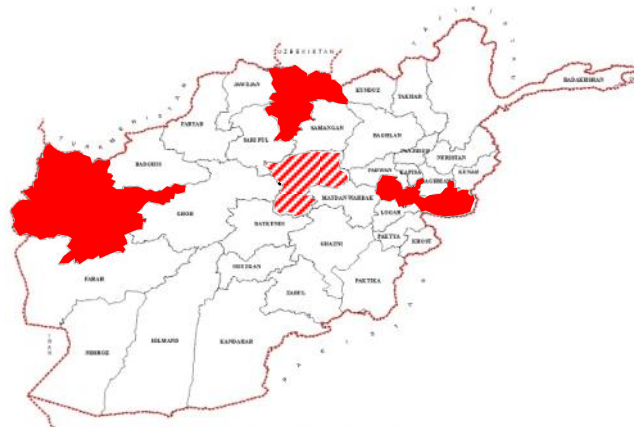
ANDS Secretariat

Donors

Italy, UK



* As of 12 April 2011



Coverage of GEP: Balkh, Herat, Kabul, and Nangarhar

Planned expansion: Bamyan

Project Overview

Under the overarching gender mainstreaming goals of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) as well as the National Assistance Plan for Women in Afghanistan (NAPWA), the first phase of GEP worked to build the Government's capacity for stronger policy formulation and gender mainstreaming to overcome deep-rooted gender inequalities in the country.

Phase I of the Institutional Strengthening for Gender Equality Project (GEP) concluded in December 2010. The Initiation Phase for the second part of GEP was launched in 2011 to develop and prepare for the second phase of activities to be implemented from 2012 to 2013.

The Initiation phase of GEP has two key objectives:

- 1. Enhance policy development capacity of MoWA** through the establishment of Women Policy Development Center (WPDC), to ensure other line ministries that have an impact on improving women's quality of life can develop and implement gender sensitive policies and strategies
- 2. Strengthen the capacity of provincial government and traditional institutions** for the political and socio-economic empowerment of women through the establishment of support institutions such as the provincial women's development council (PWDC)

GEP emphasizes the modeling of gender mainstreaming into its key government partners, develops gender-based knowledge-products and integrates gender into teachings of selected academic institutions, religious leaders, and community leaders. The goal is to change the mindset of the people about women's role in society and their contribution to national development.

Context

Surveys show that the socio-economic position and rights of most girls and women in Afghanistan is still very low. Given the lack of opportunities for their education, health care, economic development and active participation in community and nation building during the long period of conflict, specific attention for their development is required.

Since 2001, gender has taken the centre stage of development initiatives in Afghanistan. A chain of developments focusing on enhancing the role and contribution of Afghan women in the development process has underscored the relevance of mainstreaming gender into the national development objectives and outcomes.

The major international agreements and conventions on protecting and promoting women's rights have been ratified by the Government and national policy documents such as the Constitution, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and others have included gender as a cross-cutting theme for achieving equitable growth and sustainable development.



Key Results 2010

- Trained 500 religious leaders on gender issues to create a change of thinking in their teachings and sermons after the training programme
- Established 8 Legal Help Centres (LHC) to provide support to vulnerable women and provided training for staff, women CDC members and paralegal volunteers to raise awareness about women's legal rights and access to the justice system.
- Established two gender sensitive media centres in Balkh and Herat for increased publication of women's rights in the print media and in the television
- Established Monitoring & Evaluation Unit at MoWA to specify roles of each line ministry for gender mainstreaming & implementation of NAPWA indicators
- Published a research survey report based on the findings of research teams on "Gender-based Violence in 3 Universities" in collaboration with UNESCO and Kabul University.
- Established Gender Responsive Budgeting cell in the Ministry of Finance and trained ministry officials in gender-responsive budgeting
- Organized first certificate courses on "Gender, Conflict & Development" for faculty members in Kabul, Herat and Balkh universities
- Trained over 130 girls students in IT skills in partnership with the CISCO IT Academy at Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA)

Combating Violence Against Women: Legal Help Centers

Violence against women in Afghanistan has reached epidemic proportions: one in every three Afghan women is subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence.

Working in partnership with the Department of Women's Affairs (DOWA), Department of Justice, and Afghan institutions in Balkh and Herat provinces, UNDP's Gender Equality Project set up 8 Legal Help Centres in 2010 to provide victims of domestic violence with legal protection and support. The Centres, which are managed by a qualified lawyer and two paralegal assistants, also provide training to local communities and work with the authorities to highlight the issue of women's rights and thereby influence policy and implementation. They also provide resources for advocacy campaigns.

The centres have already helped women like Manijha, 18, in Balkh province. Forced to marry a man 20 years her senior, she was continually beaten until she fled to the LHC at DOWA. Through the mediation of the manager, the case was resolved in the presence of family members and community leaders.

Another success is the case of Suraiya, sold at the age of 7 into marriage. Unable to tolerate the beatings of her husband and his family any longer, she ran away at 16 to her father's home only to be brought back to her husband. On her return, she was severely beaten and thrown out of the house. The LHC at Ariana Legal Centre registered her case, lodged a formal complaint with the police and followed her case until the husband and father-in-law were imprisoned for 3 years.

Since the establishment of the Legal Help Centres, over 100 cases per month of violence against women have been registered in each province and nearly 40% of the cases relating to early and forced marriages were resolved. Cases resolved or referred for further legal action are recorded on a database that is maintained by the respective Departments of Women's Affairs.

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