EPD | EQUALITY for Peace and Democracy

# 2010 & 2011

## MAJOR ACTIVITIES

## CO-EXISTENCE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

### Peace Building

***Promoting Peace, Culture of Tolerance and Custom of Non-violence***

***Advocating for Women's Participation in National Consultative Peace Jirga***

EPD in partnership with Afghan Women Network (AWN) organized a one day "Afghan Women's Forum" at the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul. The forum was attended by more than 260 Afghan women from the centre and the 34 provinces with the objective of having interaction with policy makers on women's role in the National Consultative Peace Jirga. As a result the government allocated more than 380 seats for women in the Peace Jirga

***Raising Awareness through Partnering with Religious Leaders***

EPD has been working with the local religious leaders in seventeen provinces of the country. EPD through these religious leaders organized Awareness Raising Workshops and Interactive Discussions with more than 5,000 young student and non-student boys emphasizing on the importance of culture of "Tolerance and Do No Harm" and "Nonviolence". Furthermore, some of the religious leaders also delivered speeches in mosques on the same subjects especially after Friday prayers.

### Good Governance

***Promoting transparency and accountability for public policies, strategies and resources s***

***Kabul Conference***

In partnership with Afghan Women's Network and Ministry of Women's Affairs, EPD organized the "Afghan Women's Movement from First Women's Council to Kabul Conference" for 150 Afghan women from the center and provinces to interact with the Government Officials and International Community's Representatives regarding Kabul Conference and issues related to women. The government had already appointed one representative to represent Afghan Civil Society and women in the Kabul Conference before this conference. Consequent to the interactions held in this conference the Afghan Civil Society managed to select their own representative, who finally represented them in the Kabul Conference.

### *Women Political Rights from Perspective of Islam*

EPD with the support of Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs developed eight TV and Radio Spots on the rights of women's political participation which were based on the relevant verses from Holy Quran and were aired on seven (7) TV channels and eight (8) national radio channels just before the Parliamentary Elections, thus ensuring wide national coverage.

### *Citizens Interaction with Candidates*

EPD organized an interaction between female Parliamentary Election Candidates and the women of Kabul, Balkh and Nangarhar. During this program the candidates explained their future plans for women empowerment and committed to advocate for women empowerment if they secured sufficient votes of confidence.

### *Women and Parliament*

EPD in partnership with Ministry of Women's Affairs organized another two days Networking and Interaction Forum for Women representing different Sectors i.e. Parliament, Civil Society, Private Sector, Media, Government and Provincial Councils. Besides networking amongst themselves, these women also got a chance to interact with high Government Officials and Ambassadors of United States of America and United Kingdom on challenges faced by women and possible solutions to address them.

### *Afghans Coalition for Transparency and Accountability*

EPD has established "Afghans Coalition for Transparency and Accountability" (ACTA), which is a coalition of Civil Society Organizations, networks and associations as well as individuals at the national and community levels who are voluntarily advocating for transparency and accountability of public policies, strategies and resources. This coalition is reviewing government governance related policies and strategies and using national budget as a main advocacy tool for improving service delivery. At the moment this coalition is functional in Kabul, Nangarhar and Balkh provinces.

### *Gender Equality Platform*

EPD has established a "Gender Equality Platform" (GEP) to bridge the gap between women in Parliament and all other sectors that are working for women empowerment. Since the commencement of GEP, several initiatives for increasing women's political participation had been taken through this Platform. EPD has arranged meetings with Women High Peace Council; assisted the Women Committee of Parliament with their 2012 Annual Plan; and interacted with Ambassadors of Canada and India on women issues.

### *Women Parliamentarians' Resource Center*

To assist female parliamentarians with resources and best practices from other countries, a "Women Parliamentarian Resource Center" had been established within the Parliament premises and close to the main meeting hall for convenience of female MP's. The resource center is equipped with up to date facilities of internet, printing copying and also resource information for female Parliamentarians. The center also provides training on internet usage to MP's and assistance in online research and information collection.

### *Training of Provincial Council*

EPD has provided three days training to female Members of Provincial Councils on, 1) Women as Peace Advocates, 2) Gender Mainstreaming, 3) Women's Role in Good Governance, The curriculum for these trainings was developed by well-experienced Afghan experts with technical advice of Institute for Inclusive Security.

## Education

***Advocating for quality and accessibility of education for all***

### *Advocating for Approval of Two Policy Actions*

Ministry of Women's Affairs has drafted two Policy Actions for increasing girls' enrollment in primary and higher education. EPD in partnership with Afghans Coalition for Transparency and Accountability (AWAC) organized a consultation workshop for relevant civil society organizations to review both policies and present their recommendations to leadership of MoWA. EPD assisted MoWA in incorporating all those recommendations into both action plans and assisted MoWA in presenting the Policy Actions to Ministries of Education and Higher Education as well as Women and Education Commissions of Parliament. After the agreement of Ministry of

Education and Women and Education Committees of Parliament the Policy Action for increasing girls' enrollment in primary education was submitted to the Office of the President, which had been recently approved by the President of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Currently EPD is assisting MoWA in the development of an Action Plan for monitoring implementation of the approved Policy Action. The Policy Actions for increasing girls' enrolment in higher education was recently approved by Ministry of Higher Education and is still under review by Women and Education Commissions of Parliament.

***Raising Awareness in Partnership with Religious Leaders***

EPD through religious leaders has organized workshops and interactive discussions for more than 10,000 community elders, girls, boys and parents raising awareness on educational rights of women from Islamic perspective. This initiative focused on taking religious leaders out of mosques and going to the communities. Besides raising awareness, the religious leaders also discussed the challenges faced by families sending their girls to schools. Most of the challenges mentioned by communities had been incorporated in both Policy Actions to be addressed.

**Partners**

Ministry of Women's Affairs
Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Higher Education
Women, Education and Budget Committees and General Secretariat of Parliament
Members of Gender Equality Platform
Members of Afghans Coalition for Transparency and Accountability
Members of Afghans Women Advocacy Coalition

**Donors and Supporters**

GTZ – Gender Mainstreaming Project
Counterpart-International – IPACS
British Embassy
USAID – Ambassador Small Grants for Gender Equality
UN Women
US Embassy