

EQUALITY FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRACY

QUARTERLY UPDATE

JULY- SEPT 2014

PROMOTING A CULTURE OF COEXISTENCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND PEACE FOR ALL

In the third quarter of 2014, EQUALITY for Peace and Democracy took on three new projects and took several initiatives for organization development. EPD's new project include expanding the ACTA network to three new areas of Kabul, conducting EPD's Annual National Budget Review, and beginning a project promoting women's rights through Islam and strengthening women's access to justice.

In this quarter, EPD held a training for all staff on a new monitoring and evaluation system for all projects, introduced two new policies on M&E and gender, introduced a monthly reporting mechanism for all Kabul-based and provincial staff, and held its final quarterly retreat of 2014 to develop unit action plans and discuss planning through the end of the year.

EPD launched the first paper of their 2014 Women's Perspectives Series on women, peace and security in Afghanistan, and looks forward to launching the second paper of the series on women and elections in the fourth quarter, as well as research on budget planning and execution in the Ministries of Public Health and Education, vulnerabilities to corruption in government procurement and recruitment processes, the annual budget review, and the annual PWN paper on women's perspectives regarding the Afghan government's commitments to women and gender equality.

EPD looks forward to trainings for its ACTA and PWN members, documentary screenings and all remaining activities in 2014.

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EPD launched the first publication of their 2014 Women's Perspectives Series. The publication under the name of "Women, Peace and Security in Afghanistan: Looking Back to Move Forward" is the first in EPD's 2014 Women's Perspectives Series, a series of publications and reports on critical issues facing Afghanistan from the perspectives of Afghan women.

right of every human being and most importantly of women and children."

The findings were also shared with members of the international community in an event hosted by the European Union in Afghanistan. In the opening speech, EU Ambassador stated "Women's rights are the primary and core mandate of EU in Afghanistan. We are committed to work for women to ensure their wellbeing and provision of services they need."

Both events were well attended by Afghan media, civil society representatives, members of the international community and Afghan youth.

The full report can be downloaded in [English](#), [Dari](#), and [Pashto](#).

In the launch event for Afghan civil society and media in Park Star Hotel on 03 September 2014, Ms. Shukira Barakzai, member of Afghan parliament stated, "what we noticed under the name of peace is only a project not a process, because a process is inclusive and transparent." Ms. Mahbouba Siraj, one of civil society activist added, "Living in peace and security is the



EXPANDING ACTA TO DEH SABZ, QARABAGH, AND DASHT-E BARCHI IN KABUL PROVINCE



QUARTERLY RETREAT AND NEW POLICIES ON M&E AND GENDER

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LAUNCHING POLICY PAPER ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFGHANISTAN



In July 2014 EPD began a new project called 'Kabul Urban Transitions', which covers the expansion of EPD's ACTA network to three new chapters in Deh Sabz, Qarabagh, and Dasht-e Barchi areas of Kabul province.

Urbanization will shape Afghanistan's future as profoundly as the political and security transitions. Urban growth in Kabul province has far outpaced the ability of its municipal and district governments to deliver services. These areas have been chosen because of their mix of conflicts and community resiliencies, youth demographics, political importance, and geographic location along major transit routes connecting the capital to the northern, eastern, and southern regions of the country.

The goal of this project is to establish three youth ACTA networks and assist them in developing advocacy action plans, to strengthen community capacities to promote peaceful transition, and to build community capacity to engage in civic advocacy in pursuit of greater transparency and accountability.

EPD established an ACTA network in Qarabagh with 20 male and 20 female members, a network in Dasht-e Barchi with 20 male and 12 female members, and a network in Deh Sabz with 19 male and 12 female members, totaling 103 new ACTA members in Kabul province. The new members have received one round of training on peace and conflict resolution, and will receive a second round in October.

On 10 September 2014, EPD held its last quarterly retreat of 2014. In this retreat, all Kabul-based EPD staff attended and updated Terms of Reference were developed for each position. Each staff member presented their ToR to the rest of the team to ensure clarity on roles and responsibilities. Each unit then developed their unit action plan through the end of the year.

In this period, EPD also developed and introduced two new policies. EPD's Gender Policy outlines the basics of EPD's approach to gender, key elements of gender inequality, and gender as a crosscutting issue. It includes directives regarding staff composition, workplace environment, staff capacity building, organization policies and systems, and coordination. It outlines EPD's Gender Policy for programming, including

project and program planning, monitoring and evaluation, research, and advocacy and communications.

EPD's Guiding Principles for Gender in Practice:

1. Promote women's quality participation at the local and national levels
2. Empower women to identify and advocate for their own solutions
3. Build networks and coalitions
4. Promote women's participation and perspectives in all areas
5. Advocacy
6. Promote gender equality with empowering images and rationale
7. Do no harm
8. Engage male supporters
9. Promote gender equality through Islam

EPD's Technical Advisor also prepared a new policy to upgrade EPD's M&E system from compliance and activity reporting to a results-based framework. From 10-13 August 2014, the EPD Research Unit trained all EPD staff in the Kabul Office. The aim of this training was to develop an integrated M&E system and provide a capacity building training for EPD employees. In order to be successful in all projects EPD had this training to help the organization implement projects efficiently and effectively and track not only outputs and activities but also outcomes and impacts.

The 1st to 3rd days of the M&E training were for general information about monitoring and evaluation and EPD's new

system. On the 4th day of the training the trainers prepared practical exercises in order to give trainees the chance to understand how M&E works in practice. Exercises included completing a Risk Assessment, Stakeholder Analysis, Project Logical Framework, and Data Collection Plan.

EPD's M&E system includes individual monthly work plans and all-EPD quarterly meetings and action plans. These M&E templates will be a requirement for all new projects and will be incorporated into ongoing projects, including ACTA and PWN. An M&E database has also been developed which will be maintained and regularly updated by EPD's Research Officer.

ALL-STAFF TRAINING ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION



NEW STAFF AT EPD



Towfeeq Samim
Senior HR and Procurement Officer

Towfeeq joined EPD as the Senior HR and Procurement Officer in August 2014. He has several years of experience in finance and administration with NGOs, the Afghan government, and in the private sector in Afghanistan. Towfeeq speaks Pashto, Dari, English, and Urdu and has completed trainings in computer skills, performance improvement, preventing workplace harassment, associate relations and affirmative action, and teamwork. He has traveled in India, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Dubai, and South Korea.

What are you most excited about working at EPD?

Joining EPD was a good chance for me. The people working with EPD are very friendly and the environment is very good. EPD has a very professional environment, and besides that it's an Afghan NGO. One good thing about EPD is that no matter what position you're working in, everyone respects each other here. There is a lot of work, and everyone tries their best to get things done by helping each other. There is a very strong culture of teamwork.



Maurits Rade
EPD Associate

Maurits joined EPD as the EPD Associate in May 2014. He supports EPD's work in the areas of research, resource mobilization, and advocacy. Maurits holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Conflict Studies and a Master of Science in Violence, Conflict and Development from SOAS. He has been trained in social science research, which includes inductive and deductive methodology, ethnographic research, combining qualitative and quantitative data, and interdisciplinary analysis. He also has extensive case-study knowledge of the discourses around peace-building, good governance and war to peace transitions. Maurits was previously a Lantos Fellow working for the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific in Washington D.C.

What are you most excited about working at EPD?

The reason why I enjoy working at EPD is first and foremost because I believe in and fully support EPD's mission and program activities, which motivates me on a daily basis. I also feel that EPD as an organization allows me to develop and attain new skills and capabilities in a welcoming and friendly environment. The diversity of tasks, adequate supervision and guidance, and steep learning curve enables me to reach my fullest potential.

DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

United States Institute of
Peace

Creative Associates

Embassy of the Kingdom
of the Netherlands

United Nations
Development Programme

Tawanmandi

The Asia Foundation

WHERE WE WORK



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

To learn more about our work and organization, email us at admin@epd-afg.org or visit our website at www.epd-afg.org.

Currently, EPD offers two platforms, Afghan's Coalition for Transparency and Accountability (ACTA) and Provincial Women's Network (PWN), under which college/university students or fresh

graduates can volunteer in different positions and be a part of the dynamic EPD team and gain on the ground experience of project management, event management, and operations.

To learn more go to: <http://www.epd-afg.org/working-with-us.html>