



Press Release

For Immediate Release

11 July 2020

Launch of the project “Preventing the Spread of Covid-19 through Awareness Raising, Advocacy and Mobilization of Religious Leaders, Community Elders and Women Activists” in Herat and Kandahar

Herat’s close proximity to the Islamic Republic of Iran – which was an epicenter for the spread of the COVID-19 during March, put the province at a heightened risk with tens of thousands of people crossing the border on daily basis. Similarly, Kandahar shares border with Pakistan and thousands of Afghans returned from Pakistan through the Chaman border. The returnees, some surely infected with the coronavirus when in Iran and Pakistan, clustered shoulder to shoulder in massive crowds on both sides of the crossing, where basic hygiene facilities are scarce. This massive influx from Iran and Pakistan to the cities of Herat and Kandahar made people vulnerable to COVID-19 at the community level. The cases of COVID -19 are high in number in these two provinces. It is therefore important to raise awareness on the preventive measures of COVID-19 in these provinces.

While COVID-19 continues to spread globally, there is a fact that not everyone is aware of the preventive measures that are to be followed to fight COVID-19 at the community level. Lack of awareness and misinformation at the community level has weakened the fight against Covid-19 and thus led to increase in number of COVID-19 positive cases throughout Afghanistan, particularly in these provinces. In addition, the lockdown measures imposed as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic has put economic pressure on low income families which has put women on heightened risk and has led to increased violence against women.

Equality for Peace and Democracy (EPD) organization with the financial support of the Embassy of Canada has taken the initiative “Preventing the spread of Covid-19 through awareness raising, advocacy and mobilization of religious leaders, community elders and women activists” for preventing spread of COVID-19 in Herat and Kandahar.

The project will financially support 50 women headed families, raise awareness among community people on preventive measures of COVID-19 and will address issues related to domestic violence through women activists, community & religious leaders. These leaders will also advocate for transparency in government health services, especially with reference to Covid-19.

For further details on this initiative and its activities, please contact Ms. Forozan Rasooli, Deputy Director of EPD at 073 066 3574 or forozan.rasooli@epd-afg.org

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