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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 9, 2012

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Mobile Money Contest Rewards Afghan Students Talents

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN | JULY 09, 2012 – At today's ceremony in Kabul, eight Afghan students were proclaimed winners of the nationwide senior university-students contest for innovative applications on mobile money. The contest was held from April 18 through June 17, 2012 at 33 public and private universities across 18 provinces in Afghanistan.

All awarded innovations have high practical relevance in business or social services throughout the country and range from the payments of university tuitions, traffic and passport fees to grocery shopping and purchasing of construction materials, handicrafts and other products while using the mobile money application on the phone. Each of the four major mobile network operators offering mobile money services (AWCC, Etisalat, MTN and Roshan) will soon introduced two new mobile money applications based on the winning students' ideas.

"The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was pleased to partner with the Ministry of Higher Education and the Association of Mobile Money Operators of Afghanistan (AMMOA) to expand the use of mobile money in Afghanistan through the nationwide university-students contest which attracted more than 5000 participants. Today we are awarding the 8 winners and their respective universities for their contribution to the economic development of Afghanistan," said USAID Acting Mission Director Brooke Isham.

The students with the winning entries received a cash prize each, while their respective universities will receive five desktop computers with internet connections to be placed at the university libraries

In May 2012, USAID helped four major mobile network operators offering mobile money services to form AMMOA, industry association which promotes the use of mobile money services. AMMOA decided to tap into Afghan student talents by organizing a nationwide contest that encourages the student population to come up with ideas that lead to innovative applications, relevant to the daily life of an Afghan citizen.

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