



PRESS RELEASE

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USAID and Ministry of Women's Affairs Expand Women's Internship Program to Herat Province

HERAT, AFGHANISTAN | SEPTEMBER 17, 2012 – Twenty Afghan female university graduates began internships in Herat today as part of the expansion of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Women in Government Internship Program into the province. These women will complete six-month internships at the Provincial Directorate of Women's Affairs, the branch office of the Ministry of Finance, and other government offices in Herat. To date, of the 183 graduates of the internship program, an impressive 76 percent have been placed in jobs.

"I am happy that Internship program advances social and business opportunities for women," said the Head of Herat Directorate of Women Affairs Mahbuba Jamshidi at the ceremony marking the program launch.

The USAID Women in Government Internship program supports the Afghan Government's National Development Strategy goal to increase women leadership in the civic sector to at least 30 percent by 2013. Currently only 18 percent of the over 330,000 Afghan Government employees are female. The provincial expansion of this program will play a key role in helping Afghanistan reach this goal.

"USAID strongly supports the right of women to education and work, and we are delighted to work alongside the Ministry of Women's Affairs and offer our support as they work to increase the role of women in government," said USAID's Regional Deputy Economic Growth Officer Mohammad Ishaq Shiwani.

The Women in Government program strives to remove constraints on Afghan women's participation in the civic sector of Afghanistan by placing recent female university graduates in six-month internships with the Afghan Government institutions. Improving the participation of women in government is vital to the overall development of Afghanistan and its successful transition post 2014.

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