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USAID Expands Women's Internship Program to Nangarhar Province

JALALABAD, AFGHANISTAN | OCTOBER 7 – Twenty Afghan female university graduates began internships as part of the expansion of the USAID Women in Government Internship Program to Nangarhar province today. These women will complete six-month internships at the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ariana University, and Ministry of Public Health in Nangarhar province.

In June, 20 women began six-month internships with the Department of Women's Affairs in Balkh province, marking the first expansion of the Women in Government Internship Program to the provinces. In August 2012 the program launched in Herat province. Today marks the expansion of the program to Nangarhar province.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for our fresh graduated female students to develop their skills and get experience through this internship program. This is good for developing our society because women comprise 50 percent of the population," said Deputy Governor of Nangarhar Province Muhammad Hanif Gardiwal.

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 women. The provincial expansion of this program is a key step in helping Afghanistan reach this goal.

"USAID strongly supports the right of women to education and work, and we are delighted to offer our support to the Ministry of Women's Affairs as it clears the path for talented women to bring their abilities and skills into government," said USAID Project Management Specialist in Nangarhar Zeba Noori.

To date, the USAID Women in Government Internship Program has provided internship opportunities to 190 interns in Kabul and the provinces. The 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. # # #

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