



Weekly Activity Update

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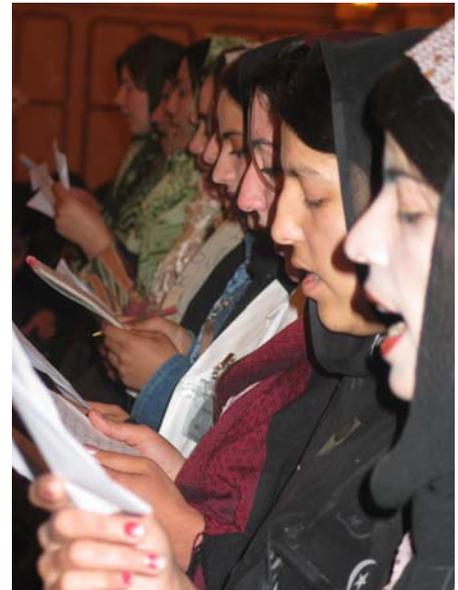
Building Capacity in the Health Sector

First Class of Afghan Midwives Graduate

Afghanistan suffers from one of the worst infant and maternal mortality rates in the world. But now a new generation of midwives, the first ever to undergo a full two-year professional training, is about to enter the Afghan work force. On April 13, 138 Afghan women graduated, with another 90 scheduled to graduate at the end of the month. The new graduates come from 20 provinces and were trained in a rigorous curriculum adopted by the Ministry of Public Health. The students did clinical work at Kabul's Rabia Balkhi, Malalai, and Khair Khana hospitals.

The new midwives will not only practice their obstetric skills but use them to train other midwives and female health providers who work directly inside the home. Training of trainers is a critical capacity building concept, allowing an efficient solution to a country where the vast majority of women give birth at home, but only 8% with help from a trained attendant, and where for every 1,000,000 live births, an estimated 1,600 women die.

These 228 graduates represent a 65% increase in the number of skilled birth attendants in the nation. They are the first of the 830 new midwives expected to be trained by 2006 under a USAID grant of \$6.7 million.



Recent graduates from a two-year professional midwife training program read pledges

Strengthening the Government

OTI Radio Programs

USAID funded student radio stations in the Herat and Mazar Novice Journalism Training Programs (NJTP) are becoming increasingly self sufficient thanks to commercial sales. In Herat these funds are used to provide additional English language and management training for NJTP students, while in Mazar the funds are building a second studio in the radio station Rabia Balkhi. This facility will provide students with more live broadcasting opportunities and studio time.

USAID sponsored two *Nau Roz* (Afghan New Year) concerts at the Ariana Theatre in Kabul on March 27 and 31. *Nau Roz* celebrations, a strong part of Afghan culture, were banned by the Taliban during their rule. Over 700 people attended the events and provided USAID sponsored Tolo TV, an invaluable opportunity to train its staff in multi-camera production. The broadcasts aired on the USAID-supported independent commercial television station in Kabul.



The graduation's featured speaker was Minister of Public Health, Dr. Mohd. Amin Fatemi.



Performers at a USAID supported Nau Roz (New Year) concert in Kabul.

Strengthening the Government

Mapping Afghanistan for Land Titling Purposes

On April 3rd a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between USAID/Land Titling & Economic Restructuring in Afghanistan (LTERA) & the Afghan Geodesy & Cartography Head Office (AGCHO). The LTERA project has begun training a team of mapping specialists from the AGCHO in a fast and affordable technique using aerial photography for mapping. LTERA is providing equipment and capacity building in geo-spatial mapping technology and AGCHO is providing mapping materials, coordinates and a flying permit to restart the mapping of Afghanistan, which was interrupted by years of war.

Mapping is an essential component of LTERA's initiative to move Afghanistan towards a unified, modern system of property registration. "Only 30% of Afghanistan has been properly mapped," said Engineer Abdul Raouf, General President of AGCHO. "We still have 70% to go."



Kabul's District 7 is the site of the pilot mapping project



Birds' eye view of Kabul's District 7

Security Incidents

Note: Hostile attacks are reported through USAID's security contractors and the Associated Press

- **Number of Hostile Attacks:** During this reporting period, there were seven hostile attacks resulting in six injuries.
- **USAID Related:** During this reporting period, there were no hostile attacks directly affecting USAID related projects and/or staff. There were seven other attacks against other aid agencies and NGOs.
- **Last Attacks:** On 16 April in Zabul, two engineers with UNOPS were injured when their vehicle hit an IED on the road between Qalat City and Shinkay District Center. The engineers were on their way to survey an area road. Combined Forces assisted the victims and analyzed the scene.

