



WEERDP/MRRD



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About WEERDP/MRRD:

Women Economic Empowerment Rural Development Program (WEERDP), under leadership of Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and in view of National Unity Government (NUG) goals and WEE-NPP objectives, was initiated in 2018 in continuation of Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program (AREDP) for the purpose of social and economic empowerment of women in rural areas of all 34 provinces of Afghanistan with the financial aid of World Bank.

Through this program Self Help Groups (SHG), Enterprise Groups (EG), Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) and Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) will be established to develop local economy, and create income generation and job opportunities for program beneficiaries (80% female) in rural areas of Afghanistan.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH



This month's employee of the month is Mr. Abdullah Nasry, Community Mobilization & Institution Development (CMID) Officer. Mr. Nasry holds Masters in Business Administration. Mr. Nasry has more than 30 years of relevant professional experience, he has been working with AREDP/WEERDP program for almost three and a half years. Since his employment with WEERDP, he has been an integral part of the program's development and growth in Kochies' Enterprises, therefore, he is recognized as one of the most productive employees of the organization. We wish him all the very best in his future endeavors.

WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (WEERDP) HOSTED AACRS MEETING WITH GIROA IN MRRD

The Australia Afghanistan Community Resilience scheme (AACRS) is the Australian Government's rural development program in Afghanistan. The AACRS is a partnership between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), the Government of Australia acting through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and five non-governmental organizations (NGOs): Action Aid Australia, Aga Khan Foundation Afghanistan, CARE Australia, Oxfam Australia, and World Vision Australia. The aim of the Scheme is to improve the livelihoods and resilience of rural Afghan communities. In the meeting, all parties emphasized to improve coordination, assist village infrastructure rehabilitation, and share reports when necessary. In the meantime, Afghanistan Center for Excellence (ACE) is responsible to play the role of scheme coordinator

on this project. ACE assist to enhance communication and remove gaps between GIROA, DFAT and NGOs. The next meeting will be held on May 01, 2019 preferably at Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL).



WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (WEERDP) WAS INAUGURATION EVENT COMMENCED IN DAYKUNDI PROVINCE

Women Economic Empowerment Rural Development Program (WEERDP) of Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development (MRRD) was initiated in the presence provincial government officials, civil society activists, and media representatives, in Daykundi's governor office. Mr. Sayed Anwar Rahmati, Daykundi governor, in a thanking note, said that MRRD's programs have been always visible in Daykundi and they are doing excessive service for people, especially for women in this province by embarking WEERDP. In addition, Mr. Ali Poya, provincial director of economy, expressed optimism for programs commencement, and said that it is great honor to have it in Daykundi province.

Similarly, Mr. Mohammad Juma Erfan, Daykundi acting PRRD, said that the program will initially

cover Nilie, and Geti districts, through which 680 Self Help Groups (SHGs), and 85 Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) will be established to insure national economy development and create employment opportunities for the program beneficiaries, of which 80% are women.

He added, the program is worth of 38 million AFN and it is initiated to be implemented during 5 years and cover 6800 residents.



BANO THE FIRST FEMALE SHOPKEEPER IN THE VILLAGE



Ms. Bano is a member of “Sahar” Saving Group (SG) in Balkh district of Balkh province. In 2013, she obtained the membership of the Saving Group (SG) and won the confidence of other members by saving an amount of 30 AFN weekly. Bano narrates her story this way: In 2013, Ms. Fatima Sarfaraz an employee of Women Economic Empowerment Rural Development Program (WEERDP) came to our village and briefed all women in the women council head’s house. Hence, I was educated about the program and I was interested to join the Saving Group to save money for my children’s future.

I was busy in household chores with no other occupation, prior to joining the program. I was suffering very much economically and socially. My husband’s low income from the shop made me worried about our life’s fate, I thought to myself, what will happen to us? I was also apprehensive about, how to send my children to school? I asked myself, whether my husband could afford to purchase books, pen and fulfill their other needs? So, how to find an income source to support my family and assist my husband to ensure prosperous life.

Consequently, I joined the Saving Group due to Ms. Fatima’s persuasion, and until 9 months ago, I was able to get Islamic loan from the Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) after Association’s and Saving Group’s members suggestion. I established a shop in a corner of my house and my husband helped me to purchase basic and essential goods for a newly opened shop. Eventually,

I was warmly welcomed by villagers. My sales were high enough to repay my debts on time, due to the encouragement and gratification of the residents. Therefore, I took another loan to increase the capital of the shop, currently, I have everything that is need of a housewife and women and children are not required to go faraway to city markets.

It is worthwhile to mention that after clearing my debt account, I got a loan of 24000 AFN from “Safa” Saving and Loan Association to buy a refrigerator for the shop, in order to sell cold water, drinks and doogh in hot summers. I am tremendously grateful to the programs employees for their advice and guidance that qualified me to serve my family and friends. As a women, I had never thought that I would work as the first female shopkeeper and earn Halal income in the Balkh district. We were underprivileged family, my husband was the only breadwinner of the house, however we have 1000 to 2000 AFN daily sale now which is a good income, besides that I have made the life of village easy too.

Since I joined the program, I and other women and girls who are part of the program are satisfied and pleased. Previously, we had only performed household chores and we were unable to do anything else. Nonetheless, the program’s great contribution to rural women was to educate them and give them the idea that they could also work and earn income to have a good life. In addition, it taught us that instead of idleness, living in poverty we should get an occupation and work along our male family members regardless of the resources. Moreover, we should demonstrate that women can also earn Halal income for family and ourselves. Now, I along other women help their husbands’ side by side in work and we have a good life.

Correspondingly, I can say that I have great plans and goals for the future, from recruiting employees to expanding my business. I encourage other women and girls in the village to work, so that they will come out of the darkness too, and see a life from another window.

WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM WAS FORMALLY INITIATED IN GHOR PROVINCE

Women Economic Empowerment Rural Development Program (WEERDP) was inaugurated in a formal ceremony on February 4, 2019 in the presence of government officials, people's representatives, members of community development council, civil society organizations and national and local media.

The program will be implemented in Firozkooh district, where 194 villages and councils are situated, and as a result, 1,552 Self-Help Groups (SHGs) will be created in these villages. In the ceremony, firstly, Mr. Mahfozullah Fakor, Ghor PRRD director explained the goals, plans, objectives and activities of the Women Economic Empowerment Rural Development Program, and asked the governor office, local authorities, and civil society institutions to cooperate with the programs official in implementation of it. Furthermore, Mr. Ali Hassan Ahmadi, head of provincial sector representing the governor office spoke about the economic crisis in the villages, drought and insecurity in Ghor province. He added that commencement of the program in Ghor province is great move, we hope to see their practical work soon in the field.

Abdul Hameed Nataqi, a representative of the provincial council, said that women's contribution and share allocation in this program is a positive step towards the growth of family economy, creation of jobs and the development of professional art and handicrafts in the villages. He asked people to offer a greater share to women in the program.

Subsequently, Halima Sharifi, head of Ghor women affairs provincial directorate, said that "women are the most vulnerable and affected class of the society socially and economically, and insignificant work have been done in their capacity building and economic growth". She expressed optimism about the positive change it would make in the economic lives of them and their families.

Correspondingly, the participants, and speakers, while praising the activities of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and its directorate in Ghor province, as well as, they requested the authorities to preserve excellence while implementation of program's objectives, which will aid in creating employment, and will support the growth of local products in the villages.



WEERDP SOUTHEAST REGIONAL MANAGER PARTICIPATED IN KHOST PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (PDC) MONTHLY MEETING



On 14th February, 2019, Provincial Development Council meeting was held in Khost provincial governor office (PGO). The meeting was attended by Khost Governor, Mr. Mohammad Haleem Fidai, Deputy Governor, Mr. Abdul Wahid Pathan, District Governors, Representatives of NGOs, Khost PRRD director and other provincial directors. The meeting was headed by Khost governor, Mr. Mohammad Haleem Fidai, he appreciated WEERDP's efforts in implementing the program effectively and efficiently. According to meeting's agenda, Mr. Sultan Karimi, WEERDP Regional Manager for South east region delivered his presentation and shared the information about WEERDP's future plans for south east zone. The participants appreciated WEERDP's plans and promised to support the program in every possible mean.

WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (WEERDP) OF MRRD MET NATIONAL HORTICULTURE & LIVESTOCK PROGRAM (NHLP) OF MAIL TO SIGN MOU

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for joint cooperation and coordination will be inked between Women Economic Empowerment and Rural Development Program (WEE-RDP) of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and the National Horticulture and Livestock Program (NHLP) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock of Afghanistan (MAIL).

First coordination meeting on the MoU was held at WEE-RDP office, Kabul, where both parties agreed to support each other in technical skills, communication, market linkages, value chain and enterprise development capacities of locally based community institutions.



WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF MINISTRY OF RURAL REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALLY INAUGURATED IN PARWAN PROVINCE

Women Economic Empowerment Rural Development Program (WEERDP) of Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development (MRRD) has officially initiated in Logar province. The inauguration event was commenced on February, 20 2019 in the governor office the province. The event was attended by Logar province governor, Mr. Anwar Khan Eshaqzai, district governors, sectorial directors, women representatives, media and village council members.

Logar Governor, Mr. Anwar Khan Ehaqzai, considered the program to be pivotal for rural women and vowed to cooperate and support the program in every possible way. Women Economic Empowerment Rural Development Program (WEERDP) of MRRD will cover Puli Alam, and Khoshi districts of Logar. Meanwhile, the program will establish 181 Village Savings & Loan Associations (VSLAs) during 5 years, and

WEERDP will inject 116 million Afghanis complimentary assistance to the VSLAs.



CONTACT INFORMATION:

-  Nila Bagh Road, Dar-ul-Aman, Kabul, Afghanistan
-  www.weerdp-mrrd.gov.af
-  www.facebook.com/weerdpofficial
-  @weerdpofficial
-  Abdulwafi.nayebzai@mrrd.gov.af
-  +93 (0) 788 911 211

