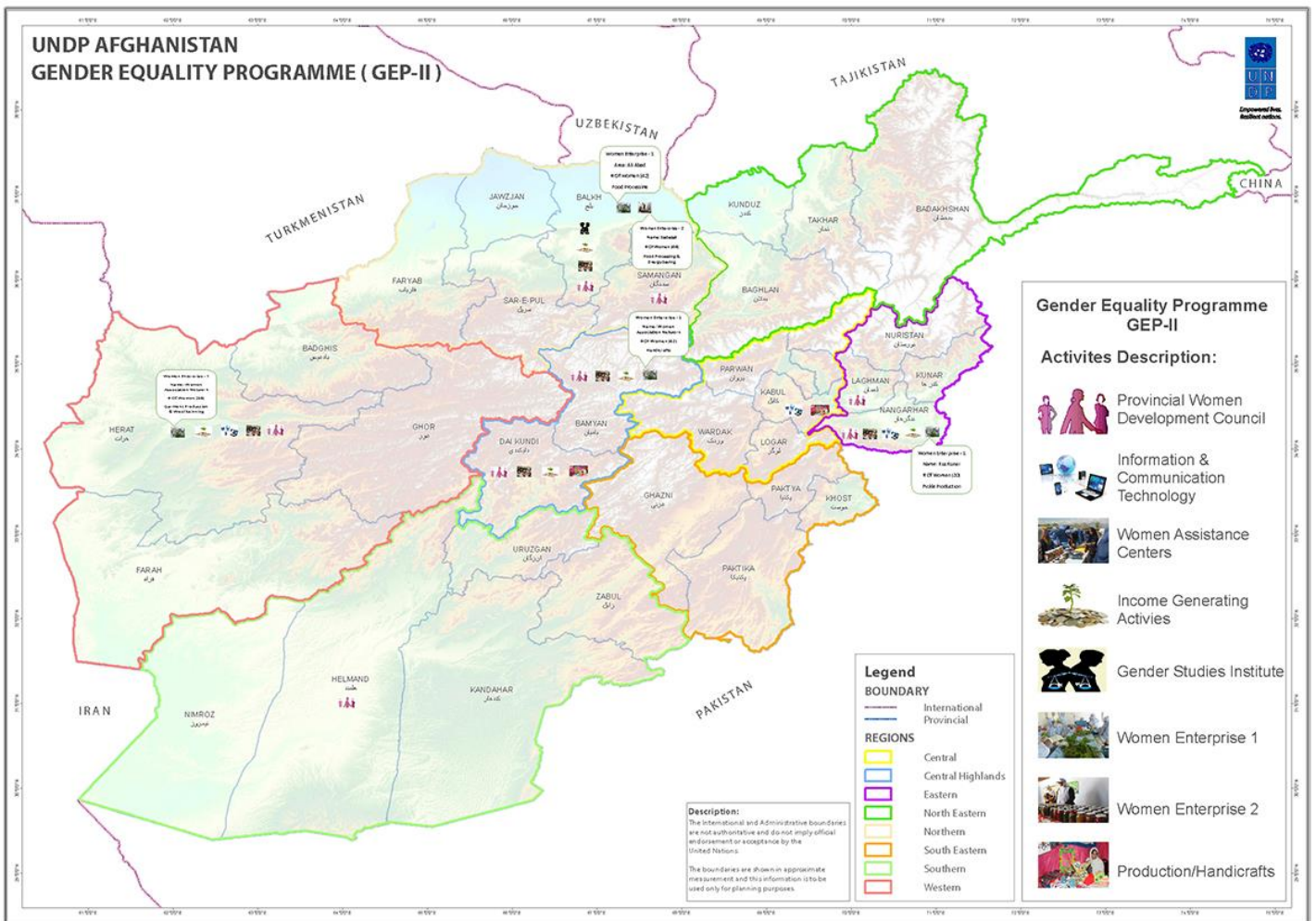


# Gender Equality and Women Empowerment II

## 2015 First Quarterly Project Progress Report



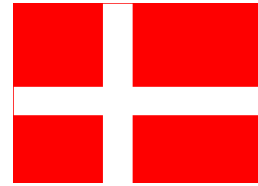
## DONORS



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## PROJECT INFORMATION

<b>Project ID:</b>	00071928
<b>Duration:</b>	January 2013 - December 2015
<b>ANDS Component:</b>	Good Governance (Gender Equality as one of the six cross-cutting themes)
<b>Contributing to NPP:</b>	Capacity Development to accelerate NAPWA implementation
<b>CP Component:</b>	Social equity of women, youth and minorities and vulnerable populations is increased through improved and consistent application by Government of principles of inclusion in implementing existing and creating new policies and legislation.
<b>UNDP Strategic Plan Component:</b>	Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
<b>Total Budget:</b>	30 Million USD
<b>Annual Budget:</b>	6,547,000USD
<b>2015 Un-Funded Amount</b>	Fully Funded
<b>Implementing Partner:</b>	UNDP
<b>Key Responsible Parties:</b>	MOWA
<b>Project Manager:</b>	Cecilia Ncube
<b>Responsible Assistant: Country Director</b>	Noorullah Ahmadzai

## ACRONYMS

APRP	Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Process
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BDS	Business Development Packages
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DAIL	Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DoWA	Department of Women Affairs
EE	Economic Empowerment
EPD	Equality for Peace and Democracy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GEP-II	Gender Equality Project-II
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GWG	Gender Working Group
ICTs	Information and Communication and Technology
JHRA	Justice and Human Rights for Afghanistan
KU	Kabul University
LHC	Legal Help Centre
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MIS	Management Information System
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MoHRA	Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
MOPH	Ministry of Public Health
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NAPWA	National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan
NGO	Non-Govt. Organization
PWDCs	Provincial Women Development Councils
SDU	Sustainable Development Unit
SNPPMC Capacity)	Strengthening of the National Policy Planning and Management
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WACs	Women Assistance Centres
VAW	Violence Against Women
WFP	World Food Program

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gender Equality Project (GEP II) stepped in the final year of its second phase with the blend of achievements and challenges. First quarter, being hallmark to the planning for the rest of the year; the project accomplished approval of the Annual Work Plan (AWP-2015) and other supporting documents. Restructuring GEP II was at the center of our planning to ensure cost effectiveness, results and evidence based management. Two of our offices, Bamyan and Balkh moved to DOWA Offices with support from MOWA to reduce operational costs. In addition, MOWA provided space for the Legal Help Centres (LHCs)/ Women Assistance Centre (WACs) and Information and Communication and Technology (ICTs). These developments will ensure sustainability of the project. Quota one focused on building a strong base for implementation.

This year, we have a unique opportunity to make greater progress as the new elected government has prioritized promotion of gender equality. Notwithstanding, the delay in appointing Ministers for key line Ministries to GEP II has been a noticeable challenge during the period under review, especially on policy reviews that require high level political engagement and commitment.

The first pillar on MOWA`s capacity on policy and oversight registered remarkable achievements; GEP II worked with MOWA to establish the first harmonized technical advisory committee to guide the development of the NAPWA monitoring database. A web based NAPWA on line prototype structure has been developed. GEP worked with the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to finalize the draft gender budgets booklet reported last year on best approaches to gender budgeting in Afghanistan. The booklet has since been approved by MOF, which means all new budget requests must now include a gender analysis. Partnering with EPD (Equality for Peace and Democracy) succeeded in significantly increasing the visibility and voice of civil society organizations in the gender budgeting process. The draft training manual has been approved by MOF to equip budget planners to analyze whether or not benefits accrue equally to women and men, resulting in some substantial shifts in national priorities. Gender Units are being strengthened through the establishment of a three tier coordination mechanism; Sub Gender Cabinet Committee, Line Ministry Gender Working Groups and Provincial Gender Working Groups (GWGs). GEP II organized high level advocacy meetings that resulted in political buy in to immediately institutionalize gender studies at Kabul University.

Results! Like the village loud hailer, this message has been reverberated from our stakeholders regarding pillar 2 on economic empowerment of women. This quarter, GEP II implemented a paradigm shift to focus the pillar on results for change, incorporating M & E, knowledge, learning, innovation, value for money and leveraging resources in the quarter under review. Mindful of the large amount of data we need to collect across several provinces, we have developed a women entrepreneurship database and automating analysis of the qualitative evidence. In partnership with various stakeholders 10 women cooperatives with a total of 1073 members were identified. 200

women members of cooperatives are benefiting from the establishment five technology usage and production centres, resultantly their business management skills have improved and income has increased from 12.7% (2014) to 15% (during the current quarter) but figure presents of a few women (108) in four provinces. 35 participants have been enrolled at CISCO ICT training center and enhanced their skills by completing a three month course on English language and ICT.

We cannot remain silent regarding violence against women. A monthly average of reported cases at LHCs is about 30 to 40 cases; Herat approximately 200 - 250; Bamyan 20 -25 and Balkh 40 to 45 cases and in Dehdadi district 40 cases. These are striking conclusions from an unprecedented assessment conducted by GEP -II pillar 3 for the existing LHCs during the period under review. Four LHCs are being established in four provinces. A lesson learnt is that while traditional attitudes remain deeply ingrained, LHCs are significantly contributing to mediation, counselling and psychosocial support to women and prevent the haunted precincts of memory violence. As convincing proof of the pervasiveness of violence against women and girls, the findings have caught attention of a number of ally institutions. Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs (MoHRA) is contributing remarkably in changing the deep entrenched negative perceptions of women in the society particularly on access to job opportunities, early marriages and violence. A book on Women's Rights from Islamic prospective under the leadership of the Women`s Rights Committee has been drafted and is currently being edited.

In 2015, we are registering solid gains together with our partners and strengthening delivering as one with UNDP projects. Partnership was established with UN Agencies ( UN Women, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Food Agriculture Organization (FAO); Government Departments (National Statistics Office, Ministries of Public Health and Education; Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs (MoHRA) Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), Ministry of Higher Education, Kabul University and UNDP projects ( Justice and Human Rights Project (JHRA), Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP), Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) SNPPMC (Strengthening of the National Policy Planning and Management Capacity).

## II. RESULTS:

### A. OUTPUT 1: MOWA`s capacity of policy-making and oversight of NAPWA Implementation improved.

The first pillar of Gender Equality Project II aims to provide support in building the capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) to effectively manage the implementation of the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA). The pillar has five components that include strengthening MoWA's policy making capacity, gender responsive budgeting, strengthening gender units, institutionalizing gender studies and implementing gender monitoring systems.

#### Indicator 1.1 Number of gender policies and strategies reviewed/formulated and gender components included

Seven policies and four strategies were reviewed in the past two years. Six gender policies/ strategies were supposed to be formulated and sixteen reviewed to include gender components in three years. Given the lengthy process of policy development and review, the project document targets were quite ambitious.

In 2015, GEP II is building on the policy review process to insert gender equality in national planning processes and policies in order to give visibility and spur action. To ignite the process, line ministries have developed plans on how they will integrate the recommendations. GEP II is providing technical support to MOWA Policy Unit and selected Gender Units to package policy briefs that will provide vital insights to guide provisions for women in the integration of gender in policies and strategies. Working sessions will be conducted to integrate the agreed issues. The policy toolkit developed last year was finalized and approved by MOWA and gender units are using it to develop action plans to integrate gender in strategies/policies/plans/programmes. Progress on this indicator was slow during the quarter because it requires commitment from Ministers; the Cabinet was established towards the end of the quarter.

#### Indicator 1.2 Number of line ministries piloted for M&E of NAPWA implementation that have functional M&E systems

The past two years achievements include support to MoWA in improving its framework for monitoring National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA), development of monitoring matrix containing measurable indicators that are aligned with indicators for the six dimensions/sectors in NAPWA (security, governance and human rights, leadership and political participation, health, education, economy and poverty) as well as with Afghanistan's international commitments on gender equality, an indicator reference sheet that standardizes the definition of each of the indicators, the method and sources for data collection, and formula for analysis of quantitative data and Qualitative and quantitative data collection tools.

Striking and remarkable achievements were realized in 2015. GEP-II and other partners aided MOWA with a technical tool that for the first time will facilitate the development

of a centralized web-based Management Information System (MIS) on gender and collecting statistics on NAPWA.



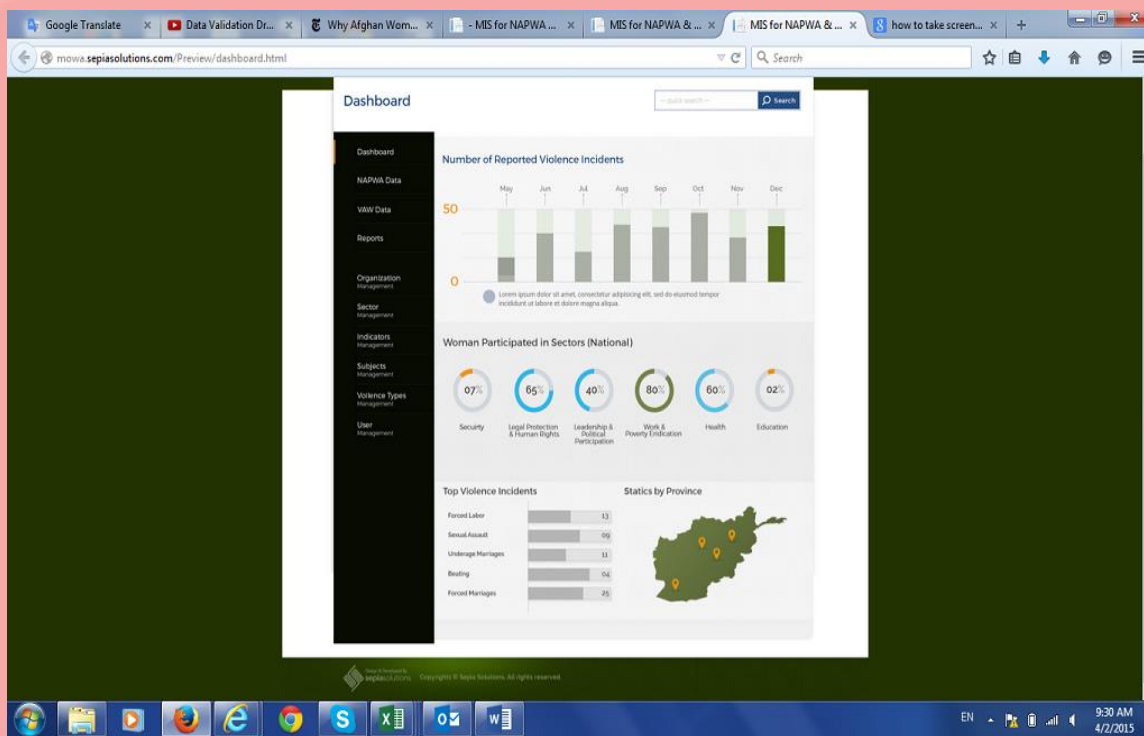
M&E Unit of MoWA Presenting the revised Tool to Monitor the NAPWA implementation to Line Ministreis.

Photo Credit, M. Kazem Shakib, Database Analyst, UNDP/GEP-II

GEP II worked with MOWA to establish the first harmonized technical advisory committee to guide the development of the NAPWA monitoring database, data collection and reporting that will accelerate efforts to generate comparable gender indicators. The MIS will be used by government and civil society for evidence-based policymaking, monitoring and budgeting. The committee is comprised of UNDP/GEP, UN Women, MOWA, UNFPA UNHCR, Sepia Solution, and Asia Foundation. MOWA has approved the development of a comprehensive database that can serve as an information system for MoWA. The off-line database developed by UN Women on Violence Against Women (VAW) will remain as an independent database which will be linked with the NAPWA database. A joint UN to UN contribution agreement has been signed with UN Women for 10 percent contribution by the agency to the total cost of Database system.

The prototype structure of the database shown below has been developed and it shows windows for NAPWA data, VAW data and reports on NAPWA. It has windows for organization, sector, indicators, subjects, violence types and users management. The database will be in three languages: English, Dari and Pashto.





### Interface Design (Dashboard)-Prototype Phase

The M&E Unit at MOWA was established to perform the role of an oversight body to supervise the implementation of NAPWA indicators by other ministries which constitute Component six of MoWA’s National Priority Programme (NPP). In the absence of NAPWA indicators baseline data, challenges have been posed to the Unit in producing progress reports. GEP-II and MOWA engaged National Statistics Office to include the NAPWA indicators in the upcoming national survey. Indicators that require primary data collection were submitted by MOWA to National Statistics Office; MOWA and GEP have been invited to be part of the committee that will be coordinating the national survey.

Collection of NAPWA policy related data from Ministries by Gender Units is almost complete, only two ministries (Communication and Technology and Counter Narcotics) have not yet submitted their data. The data has been categorized by sector and entered into computer excel sheets after which it will be analyzed.

An International Expert on Data Collection and Data Analysis is being recruited by GEP to assist in collecting, analyzing the data and producing a report in collaboration with the National Statistics Office.

## Strengthening implementation of functional monitoring and evaluation systems

To strengthen and encourage implementation of functional monitoring and evaluation systems, the MOWA library was identified as a resource that could be used by many stakeholders to sharpen their knowledge on monitoring and gender. GEP II supported an assessment of MOWA library to establish the status of the library and available resources. The library is used rarely by staff of MOWA. GEP II fostered connections between the MOWA library, selected Line Ministries, Kabul University and the Cisco Networking Academy Program to utilise the library resources. With the help of knowledge gained from the use of the MOWA library, gender units and scholars are answering the kinds of fundamental questions that contribute to measuring progress on NAPWA gender indicators.

Furthermore, it is creating a virtuous cycle that allows MOWA to improve the NAPWA monitoring and evaluation systems design through building an arsenal of independent, empirical evidence informing MOWA's monitoring work. This in turn boosts the quality of data collected on NAPWA, and promotes further contributions to the gender equality.

### Indicator 1.3 Number of ministries that have functional Gender Units

Six Gender Units of line Ministries were supposed to be supported to be fully functional in 3 years. This activity was not implemented in the previous years due to the untimely departure of technical specialist supporting the policy component of project; progress towards strengthening gender units of line ministries was very limited. The target was to have functional gender units in 2 line ministries on an annual basis. We wanted to make up for the lost achievements but there has been an emerging challenge of constrained resources in 2015.

GEP II provided technical support to gender units and MOWA on joint analytical work, development of sound proposals and resource mobilization. A draft resource mobilization strategy has been developed with GEP II support. MOWA and gender units have identified two key areas for developing joint proposals, resource mobilizing and implementation, namely (i) Marriage Registration and (ii) Campaigns for increase in girl's enrollment in school. The initiative has also enabled MOWA and gender units to play an effective role both as an advocate for women's rights, monitor on compliance to various conventions/laws related to the status of women, and a provider of basic services.

GEP II in 2015 supported MOWA to establish a three tier coordinating mechanism at national, provincial and cabinet levels in order to strengthen Gender Units. GEP II and UNDP "Strengthening of the National Policy Planning and Management Capacity" (SNPPMC) Project fostered partnership with the Gender Unit of the second Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for Women and Youth. The partnership reviewed the tors of the Gender Unit for effectiveness. GEP II supported MOWA to establish a Cabinet Sub-Committee on Gender (CSCG) which has been approved by the Office of the Vice President in principle. The Sub Cabinet Committee will provide IDLG oversight on

implementation of gender commitments by line ministries, ensure wide ownership, participation vehicle for collective decision making and leadership on NAPWA reporting. To support the Cabinet Sub-Committee, MOWA is being supported to establish Gender Working Group (GWG) in each of the pilot line Ministries. The GWG will coordinate sector gender analytical studies, development of action plans, implementation and reporting. The GWGs will strengthen Gender Units as they will provide a platform to discuss all Ministry gender issues and develop actions to support the Gender Units. The Provincial GWGs will feed provincial gender issues into national.

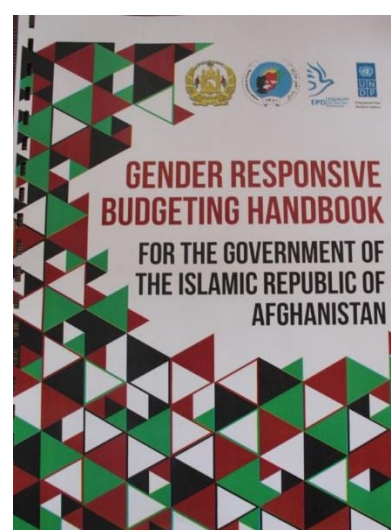
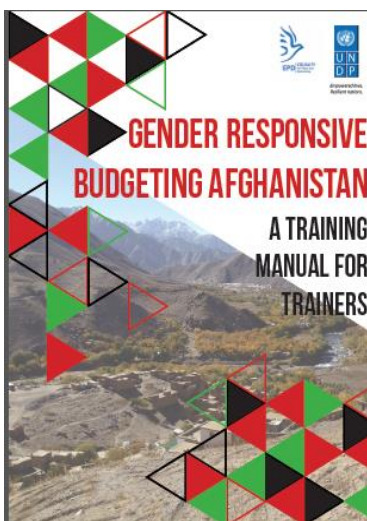
Given the limited resources, only two Gender Units of line ministries will be intensively supported to mainstream gender in plans/budgets/strategies/programmes. The Ministry of Economy (MOE) and Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) were selected as a result of a needs assessment of gender units supported by GEP II, which revealed that high impact, synergistic and multiplier effects could be achieved since the MOE is the overall strategic planning Ministry. Detailed capacity building plans for the units of the two ministries were developed. Based on the plan the gender units along with the policy and planning departments of these ministries will receive trainings in GRB.

**Indicator 1.4 Number of ministries Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) strategic plan is approved and implemented**

GRB was supposed to be piloted in nine ministries and in four provinces over a period of three years. In previous years a Gender Responsive Budgeting Strategy was developed which is pending approval after which it will be rolled into the line ministries. A GRB Technical Committee established in 2014 was not functional and is being revitalized.

Notwithstanding the challenges, results are slowly being realized, in 2015, GEP II focused on development of the GRB handbook with involvement of the Ministry of Finance. MoF firmly expressed that there should only be one handbook to be used on GRB across all the

ministries. The handbook has been approved by MOF and is currently being reviewed by MOWA. GEP-II also engaged MOF to be involved in the review of the draft training manual which has since been approved by MOF and finalized. An international consultant will be recruited for six months to provide technical support in rolling out the GRB strategy and to institutionalize GRB within MoF’s budget cell.



Recruiting qualified GRB experts has been a challenge.

A four-day training on GRB was organized for policy and budget staff including gender units of Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA), Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and Ministry of Education (MoE). The aim of training was to enhance the understanding of GRB among the participants to mainstream gender in their ministry's policies and programs.



Training on GRB to Pilot Ministries, Photo Credit, EPD

### Indicator 1.5 Percent of work completed on policy paper and curriculum for Master's Degree on Gender and Development Studies

Since early 2014, GEP II has been working closely with Kabul University as well as the Ministry of Higher Education to follow through on the partnership with Middle Eastern Technical University (METU) which was initiated in the 4th quarter of 2013. All possible avenues for collaboration with METU were explored until it became evident that a partnership cannot be forged due to human resource constraints on the part of METU and organizational limitations on funding Turkey-based staff on the part of UNDP/GEP II. The project also engaged into a dialogue with UNDP-Turkey for possible south-south cooperation but this too did not work out.

In 2015, GEP-II focused on organizing high level consultation meetings which resulted in political buy in to implement a number of activities that include; development of a Gender Studies Curriculum and proposal, Modules for the Gender Studies Curricula, mainstreaming gender in selected faculties' Curriculum, development of KU gender policy, strategy, action plan and guidelines and a establishing a functional Gender Unit at Kabul University. An international consultant has been recruited and will be in Kabul at the mid of April to provide support in implementation of activities. The international consultant will be supported by a local consultant.

### EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

Expenses incurred as of this quarter under pillar-I is USD 291,479. For further details, please see the Annex-II.

Below is a snapshot of where GEP-II is in relation to its annual targets after Q1

Progress towards Output1

2015 Baseline	2015 Annual Targets	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
7 policies and 4 strategies from 8 ministries have been reviewed in 2014.	One ministry mainstreamed gender in their policies by their relevant inter-ministerial task force;	Establish inter-ministerial task force, advocacy plan for senior government officials to integrate gender related recommendations into policies	All recommendations are being packaged into policy review papers that will be used for advocacy to integrate them into policies/strategies/ plans accordingly.	On-track
Harmonized NAPWA indicators have been developed and pilot line ministries trained.	MoWA have a functional database and M&E system for NAPWA indicators	Design of the web-based database	The Sepia Solution, a company engaged by GEP-II has completed prototype phase of web-based database for MoWA.	On-track
Gender Units needs assessment conducted and capacity strengthened through trainings on NAPWA and policy review	Gender units mainstream gender in plans, monitoring frameworks, strategies and provide recommendations,	“To conduct an assessment of gender units of the selected ministries”.	Gender Units assessment conducted	On-track
No of ministries that have a GRB strategic plan	GRB Strategic Plan is approved and implemented/incorporated in 3 pilot ministries (MoPH, MRRD, MoE) using MoWA strategic plan as a model,	Sector budget analysis study conducted in 2 line ministries to identify sector gender issues and budget gaps;	The recruitment of an international GRB consultant is in progress	The GRB experts turning down offer On track
No. of Master's Degree Program. Gender Studies Resource Center established	Master's degree program's curriculum approved and modules for the gender studies curricula developed	Engage professional services to review/develop a Masters in Gender Studies and facilitate approval; develop certificate in gender course	International consultant is on-board to prepare proposals, develop modules, curriculum for master's degree program in gender and develop gender policy for KU	On-track



GRB Training to the officials of Line Minisries, conducted by EPD, NGO contracted by GEP-II, Photo Credit EPD

## B. OUTPUT 2: Women's entrepreneurship skills developed for women entrepreneurs and cooperatives in 19 provinces

The rise and public presence of Afghan women entrepreneurs over the last five years is a new social and economic development for the country. Given the situation, GEP II Economic Empowerment pillar aims at enhancing the entrepreneurship skills of 900 women in 19 provinces, providing 30 Business Development Services (BDS) packages, establishment of 6 women led new clean technologies, establishment of four women's production centers; arranging exposure visits for 250 women entrepreneurs; and supporting 30 women's co-operatives in targeted areas to be functional and increase women's income in the targeted population by at least 20% by the end of the project.

During the past two years 600 women were trained in 11 provinces out of 900 women. The capacity of women entrepreneurs is developed through a variety of interventions such as business management skills, BDS training, exposure visits and exhibits which cumulatively has helped them learn new way of doing business and increased income by 35% (in some cases) with an average figure of 12.7% . However, these figures present only 108 women entrepreneurs in four provinces.

In spite of remarkable results and gains under Economic Development, the pillar faced many challenges in previous years in meeting some of the results especially in the area of institutional capacity building programs, Business Development Services (BDS) programs and women's participation in clean energy saving technology due to lack of mobility and security concerns which hampered wider outreach and regular interaction with women, and funding limitations. GEP II and its partners are committed to mitigate these challenges and pave the way for wider outreach in 2015.

### Indicator 2.1: Number of Income Generation Activities (IGAs) implemented in target provinces

The widespread cultural and social practices work to prevent women's empowerment. In 2015 GEP II has redefined its theory of change to empower women economically, not only focusing on income but a holistic approach that include reduction in violence, decision making, enhanced knowledge on gender and human rights; and policy. We are achieving these objectives by collaborating with other UNDP projects, MAIL, DOWA and provincial government departments.

**Increase in income:** Assessments conducted by GEP II in 2015 reveal that income for enterprises being supported by GEP II is steadily progressing towards the achievement of its target of 20% by the end of the project. Human capital of women has been enhanced, especially rural women through skills development and technology diffusion that would revive the agricultural economy of the rural areas of Afghanistan. There has been increased income of women entrepreneurs from 12.7% (2014) to 15% (during the current quarter) but figure presents of a few women (108) in four provinces. The story below is

a demonstration of GEP II results on providing technical skills to women to establish a variety of viable women-led small and medium income-generating activities.

Ms. Makai Khaksar, 44 years old widow, member of a women led cooperative in Khulm District in Balkh is the only breadwinner of her family including 6 children ever since she lost her husband during the Taliban period 16 years ago. She inherited a piece of land from her late husband which was in possession of her brother in-law and in return she would receive very little benefit. This caused her to work as waged labor to fulfill the daily needs of her children.

A high school graduate herself, she said, "I am a school graduate and could not send my daughters to school, due to financial constraints and it was the hard thing I could bear". With GEP support, she learnt new skills to earn money to be able to send her children to school. Her eyes are filled with tears as she said, "I'm proud of my two daughters who recently graduated from university and my third daughter is studying at teachers' training college (TTC) now" but she ought to be proud of herself for working very hard and sending her daughters to school.

The 15 members of women cooperative that Ms. Khaksar is also part of it in Khulm district which was established by DAIL with GEP support. She with other members got training and farming materials as completed BDS package for Saffron Cultivation in October, 2014. Ms. Khaksar also received training by GEP-II on managing her business and marketing the products from her farmland which helped her increased income and confidence.

She added that "now I am empowered and earning money, I am motivated to open the eyes of other women towards such opportunities." As per her future plan she wants to establish a female cooperative specific to saffron production, vegetable cultivation and food processing in her district to generate income for other women as well. She has already started discussion with DAIL for registering the business. "I want to give out a message to women that diligence, handwork and hope are the key to success and if they have determination, nobody can stop them from being successful."

Ms. Khaksar believes that empowering women is empowering the whole community, because the majority of women would definitely spend their income to provide basic needs of their life and educate their children as well. As a result, the future generations will be literate and economically capable.



**Access to Market and land:** Access to markets and inputs are key variables to increase income especially in the context of small and medium sized enterprises in Afghanistan. In 2015, with GEP-II support, Aliabad and Sadaqat Cooperative in Bulk was linked to local markets. GEP advocacy resulted in DAIL supporting Sadaqat cooperative to acquire a piece of land (78 Jereb). The women have started to cultivate vegetables in order to generate income. Kuli Hashmat, a group of 60 women working in Kabul was linked with the Pilwary agriculture farm for marketing of composting and the Pilwary farm will buy the products which are required for organic farming.

Sound business management improves income. During the quarter, in coordination with DAIL, GEP II sensitized twenty women members of Kuz Kunar about women's effective participation, cooperative management, income, potential markets, and venues for buying raw material and gender and women's empowerment in the context of economy development. In addition, technical support is being provided to these women cooperative members to maintain quality and standards requirements including new packaging techniques for their products. To ensure results based management, a baseline was conducted during this quarter for all the variables.



## Indicator 2.2: Number of Business Development Services (BDS) provided to women entrepreneurs

GEP II was supposed to provide 30 Business Development Services (BDS) packages focusing on 10 packages per year during the project life. In 2015 we focused on providing an integrated package of BDS ranging from needs assessments, activity identification, credit management, business management to acquisition of marketing skills, communication skills, business planning, product presentation including labeling and location of the business, exposure visits, exhibition. This was undertaken in coordination with key partners that include MoWA, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce, (ACCI) Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Commerce & industries, Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) and partner NGOs.

200 women members of cooperatives are benefiting from the establishment of garment production center through BDS programs in Herat, Bamyan and Daikundi which ultimately improves women's economic opportunities and rights. Women feel safe & secure to be trained by the production, demonstration and production centre because it is within the MOWA women's garden. Security was reported to be one of the biggest challenges for women to realise their business dreams. In order to generate knowledge and replication models on value chain concept and BDS, GEP II will pilot this project in Herat and Kabul respectively in order to draw lessons for up scaling in other provinces. With GEP II support, women are now taking part in value chain and BDS in Afghanistan which is one of the outcomes of continued support provided by the economic empowerment pillar to women enterprises.

GEP II in collaboration with UNDP's Sustainable Unit, National Environmental Protection Agency, Kabul Municipality and communities is supporting 60 women through BDS package for promoting domestic vermin composting to improve and diversify economic opportunities for women. This unique initiative of using waste for income generation of women is the first of its kind in Afghanistan.

The BDS packages of Saffron Cultivation provided last year at Khulm district Balkh Province, has also generated good results. One of the beneficiaries Ms. Makai Khaksar expressed her high satisfaction of increased income, during the quarter. Her school graduate daughter added, *"My mother's joining the cooperative and earning a decent income, not only provided basic life needs to our family but also guaranteed our future by providing us education,"* said Ms. Khujesta.

## Indicator 2.2: Number of institutional capacity building programs provided to women and girls

Women's organizations in Afghanistan play a key role in supporting the socio-economic development activities of state institutions and women's organizations. Because of the cultural context of the country, women's organizations are able to reach women who are confined to home's sphere. Implementation of such a strategy requires a high level

participation from the target groups in order to ensure skills up-grading which is an essential component of the project. This can be effective and sustainable only through an approach which directly addresses women's priorities and facilitate their active and continuous participation in economic development.

GEP II provided institutional capacity building programs to women and girls through key institutions that include PWDCs, ICT centers and Women-managed Cooperatives in the areas of needs identification, participatory planning, and development of linkages with Government departments, UN agencies and other development partners to ensure women's active participation in such forums in order to meet women's need in a sustainably fashion.

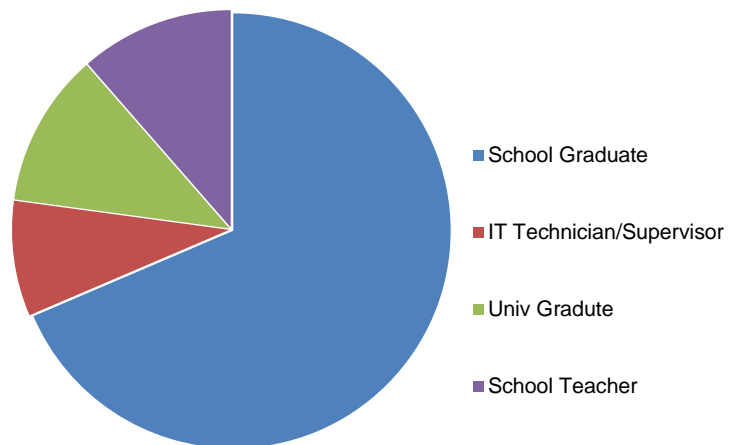
**Provincial Women`s Councils:** During the quarter, PWDCs were trained on how to identify gender needs and lobby for implementation of activities. The training resulted in three PWDCs developing annual plans for promotion of women economic development in close coordination with governor's Office, DoWA, DAIL, DOJ and women members of Shuras to ensure gender mainstreaming and women's development especially at sub-national level.

**Women Managed Cooperatives:** Enhanced capacity resulted in 10 Cooperatives preparing business plans and initiating various income generating activities in coordination with women, MAIL, DAIL, DoWA, FAO, World Food Program (WFP) and other partners. The initiative has improved the functionality of cooperatives. These income generating programs are mainly in food processing, garment production, agriculture and handicraft industries. In addition, five cooperative are helping women to increase access to resources to generate income using solar panels and green technology.

**Information and Communication Technologies:** The ICT CISCO academy established in collaboration with MoWA and Ministry of Information Technology is one of the key institutions to enhance women and girls skills in ICT and English language for better employment opportunities. GEP's Economic Empowerment pillar continued providing support to young educated girls and women in ICT in order to help them to enter in job and business market.

During the current year, 35 participants have been enrolled at CISCO ICT training center and enhanced their skills by completing a three month course on English language and

ICT. The participants at CISCO academy have been selected from different academic backgrounds and professions as showed in the pie chart. Majority of the participants (71%) at CISCO academy are school graduates while 11 % are University graduates including graduates of KU. CISCO also supported 11% school teachers and 8% IT Technician and supervisors at different organizations. As per baseline information of the participants, it was noticed that 90% of the participants wanted to utilize the gained knowledge to access better jobs at reputable organizations.



Students of CISCO with the academic and professional background

In order to outreach women in provinces, two ICT centers would be established in Herat University and DoWA office in Nanarghar. Background work including provision of ICT equipment has been completed and training will start in the next quarter in both provinces.

**Indicator 2.3: Number of functional women managed coops in targeted areas.**

In 2014, GEP II developed capacities of 100 members from 20 Cooperatives through engaging a partner NGO, Afghanistan Women's Education Centre (AWEC). Results are emerging in 2015 and GEP II continues providing support and build capacities of cooperative members. In total we worked with 30 Cooperatives in 2015.

To ensure functionality of women managed cooperatives the collaboration between GEP-II, DoWA and Department of Agriculture resulted in (i) strengthened collective actions for economic empowerment through women's identified needs and (ii) creation of a supportive environment for enlarging economic assets for Afghan women to generate income. These cooperatives/women organizations have provided a platform for women to ensure women's effective participation in meeting their specific needs through developing partnerships and linkages with UN agencies, government departments, and other development stakeholders ensuring income generation with a greater ownership and taking part in decision making for a healthy life-style. This approach has resulted in improving women's entrepreneurial skills and increased control over household income. Our findings from the baseline assessment conducted during the quarter are showing that this initiative has improved relationships between women and men. Women's self-esteem and confidence has increased and they are more involved in decision-making both at home as well as in the community.

As a result of GEP II support on strengthening business management skills of women, ten cooperatives with a membership of 660 women have initiated various income generating programs in agricultures, fruit processing, Wool spinning, handicraft and garments industries with women's full participation. In addition, women Cooperatives developed linkages with DOWA Offices, DAIL, Provincial Women`s Councils, NEPA, WFP, FAO, and other partners led to women's need identification, participatory planning and initiating of 10 income generating activities resulting functional women's cooperatives with community participation which ensures sustainability.

### Science and technology usage:

GEP II target is to establish six women led new clean technologies. The partnership between GEP II, NEPA, UNDP Sustainable Unit, MAIL and MoWA in 2015 is supporting the establishment of five cooperatives in technology usage and introducing solar panels to generate power to reduce cost and increase productivity.

These five cooperatives are; Kuz Kunar cooperative, (20 women) Daikundi handicraft Association ( 58 women) Aliabad ( 40) Sadaqat (47 ) Pilwery cooperative ( 80 women. The main sectors of support are vegetable cultivation, drying, fruit processing, and handicraft production, wool spinning and pickle making industries using solar panels and other green technology increased the number of women beneficiaries to new science, and technology usage especially solar equipment for enhancement of their income.

### Production, Demonstration and Training Centers:

In 2014, two innovative and sustainable agriculture production and training centers were established in two provinces in collaboration with DoWA and Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL) focusing on Jewelry making and saffron cultivation sector engaging women-led cooperatives. Women-led cooperatives provide a platform to enable women to increase access to resources, inputs and enhance their collective bargaining power and individual capacities and so that they could enhance their income.



1st PWDC Meeting held at Laghman,  
Photo Credit Lameha Sherzad, Project Associate Nangarhar

During the current quarter, GEP II initiated the establishment of two production centers in Kabul and Heart. In Kabul, the center is established in collaboration with MoWA, MAIL, FAO, the Sustainable Development Unit of Country Office, World Food Programme, National Environmental Protection Agency, Kabul Municipality and communities. MAIL provided 80 Jereb land in Kabul for 80 women where they would cultivate organic vegetables for income generation. In addition MAIL facilitated registration of the

cooperative. Organic vegetable farming by women cooperative is first of its kind in Afghanistan to generate knowledge for lesson learning and up-scaling in other parts of the Country.

In Heart, the garment production center has been initiated, with collaboration with Governor's office, DAIL, DoWA, AISA and PWDC members benefiting 20 women. To ensure sustainability, MOWA has provided premises for the cooperative to operate within their women's gardens. To expand markets, the Wool Spinning in Herat has been linked to Tawfiq Cooperative and wool dealers. Number of sales and income generated will be provided in the second quarter.

Representative of Dawlat Shah District Hajji Dad Mohammad, while extending his appreciation to UNDP/GEP-II for establishing the PWDC meeting in Laghman Province, the PWDC member articulated.

"It is the first time I am sitting in a meeting where only women issues are discussed and first time meeting face to face with the PC members, DoWA director, DoHRA and Governor's office representative"

#### Indicator 2.4: Number of new PWDCs functional in targeted areas

Provincial Women's Development Councils (PWDC) established in 11 provinces with GEP support, play a critical role in influencing provincial government plans for gender mainstreaming and also raising awareness about women's socio-economic rights in the target provinces. PWDC serves as a platform at the provincial and district levels for identifying women's issues, challenges, and propose solutions.

During the current quarter, in collaboration with DoWA and Governors' offices, members of local shuras (DDAs and CDCs) three PWDCs in their respective provinces of Nangarhar, Laghman and Bamyán prepared their Action plans for the year 2015 on raising awareness on violence against women and encouraging women to participate in economic activities. The PWDCs have been using advocacy and information sharing as methodologies to promote equality and women's empowerment. The PWDC members have motivated other women to use Hotline services and LHCs/WACs established by GEP in the provinces. The members have also been working with religious leaders who were trained by GEP to mediate conflict in communities. One of the critical challenges women faced is mobility and security especially in rural areas. However, GEP supports women's male counterparts (Mahram) to accompany women to awareness meetings and conferences.

#### EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

Expenses incurred as of this quarter under pillar-II is USD 209,092. For further details, please see the Annex-II.

Below is a snapshot of where GEP-II in relation to its annual targets after Q1

Progress towards Output 2:

2015 Baseline	2015 Annual Targets	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
Income generation activity has been conducted in 4 target province benefiting	2 income generation activity target province benefitting 2000 households	Support establishment of innovative sustainable agriculture production, demonstration and training center	With the joint venture of MAIL, FAO, WFP, SDU/UNDP and GEP-II efforts were geared to establish production cum demonstration centers. . 80 women beneficiaries have been provided with the agricultural land by MAIL with the technical support of SDU and GEP-II of UNDP and MAIL.	On-track
4 BDS Packages provided to 110 women entrepreneurs	10 BDS packages have been provided to women entrepreneurs	3 BDS packages provided to women entrepreneurs	9 BDS packages are in the process of development and project started strengthening the capacity of 10 women managed cooperatives	On-track
Strengthened the capacity of 3 women cooperatives and 2 business cum demonstration centres established in Herat and Balkh	. 7 women managed cooperatives strengthened	Mobilize partners to implement interventions to strengthen women cooperatives	Govt. partners (MAIL, DAIL and DoWA) and UNDP /SDU have been mobilized to strengthen 9 women cooperatives	On-track

5 new Provincial Women's Development Councils have been established for a total of 11 PWDCs	9 established PWDCs strengthened identify, advocate for and monitor impact of interventions	3 established PWDCs strengthened identify, advocate for and monitor impact of interventions	established PWDCs strengthened identify, advocate for and monitor impact of interventions	On-track
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Women Beneficiaries busy in food processing at Khewa District, Photo credit, Khisrao, Regional Coordinator Nangarhar – February 2015



### C. OUTPUT 3: Access to justice for women including awareness on women's rights among men & women increased.

The overall goal of Output 3 is to improve demand for and access to justice and human rights for women and girls and to improve the quality of delivery both in the availability and accessibility of need-based services for vulnerable women. The focus in this quarter has been to implement our Theory of Change (ToC) which is premised on the ecological model which assumes that the vicious negative cycle of gender injustice can be turned into a virtuous positive cycle by working around different initiatives that target all levels of the model from individual to societal to turn around the layers of attitudes, behaviors and practices at the level of family, community and society.

The past 2 years made progress in a number of areas. Regarding the indicator on number of community events organized; 2400 community members were sensitized on gender in 2013 and a grand campaign that covered 400 community members was mounted. In 2014, a total of 12 campaigns were conducted reaching 3,930 men and women. 1,900 magazines containing information on women's rights were published and distributed by the Department of Women's Affairs in Balkh and Herat. In an effort to strengthen the Referral Mechanism of VAW cases, an external assessment was conducted in 2014 and 462 cases were recorded through LHCs. 1801 religious leaders were trained out of 7500 target of the project document. The target is quite ambitious and the project document focused on activity results as opposed to results that show the change on gender issues. Regarding the indicator on promoting regional and security dialogues, a women's peace network was established in 2014, which is affiliated to the regional N- PEACE.

#### Indicator 3.1: Number of national and community based events organized (campaigns, trainings, conferences, seminars, TV spots) for advocacy about the rights of women and girls.

The support of GEP II interventions during the period under review are revealing that the two-sided challenge of gender inequality in Afghan society: on one hand the male counterparts consider oppression against women justified in the given socio-cultural norms practiced within the society, on the other hand, women have willingly accepted this



International Women's day celebration on 8th March, Photo Credit North Regional staff, GEP-II

oppression because this attitude of subordination has its deep entrenchment within Afghan culture. GEP II has continued with its efforts to raise awareness among communities in order to change this mindset. The women's day celebration whose theme was "Empower Women, Empower Humanity" supported by GEP II provided a platform to raise awareness for the 1870 participants in 7 provinces on justice and human rights.

8 March event in Kabul supported by GEP II and other donors was preceded by H.E. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, former President H.E. Hamid Karzai, First Lady of Afghanistan and the Acting Minister of Women's Affairs. The remarks by H.E. President committing to strengthen women's role in Afghan society and increasing the number of female civil servant in the unity government presents opportunities for achieving national targets on gender. H.E. President promised to take special measures on 1) education of women, 2) women's management and leadership role, 3) special attention to economic empowerment of women, 4) women's health issue and 5) women's legal property issues.



Women's day celebration supported by GEP-II to advocate for women's rights, preceded by President of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Mr. Ashraf Ghani - 8 March 2015

H.E. remarked that, *"in our culture, value of women has a centuries-old historical background... Love and affection of a mother forms the basis of a society... Our main commitment to you is that we will bring a fundamental sustainable change in women's role in our society... This sustainable change requires a balance between transformation and continuity... Our Constitution is clear and specific on women and thank God, it is absolutely Islamic... So, our commitment is to implement the Constitution. By its implementation, God willing, the values and demands of our women will be realized"*.

GEP II conducted quick impact assessments of the national events supported by GEP II in Herat province. The findings reveal that these programmes are raising awareness on the rights of women and changing attitudes and behavior on negative perceptions on gender equality. Three women representatives have since presented women's challenges and needs to policy makers in Herat citing the declaration of women's conditions in Herat. Furthermore, during the 8 March event in Herat province, another declaration on women's empowerment with 21 articles was developed which will be presented to the Government. The declaration includes 1) good governance, 2) access to justice, 3) cultural empowerment and 4) economic empowerment.

In Helmand province, Jamila Niazi the DoWA Director as a result of her participation at the national women's events supported by GEP II mobilized religious leaders to organise public awareness meetings on the women's rights for elimination of violence against women and girls in their respective communities. She also organized awareness meetings to encourage people to let their girls go to school. A lesson learned for Helmand DoWA office is the need to strengthen coordination on implementation of these programs and events in order to harness and leverage resources for significant impact.

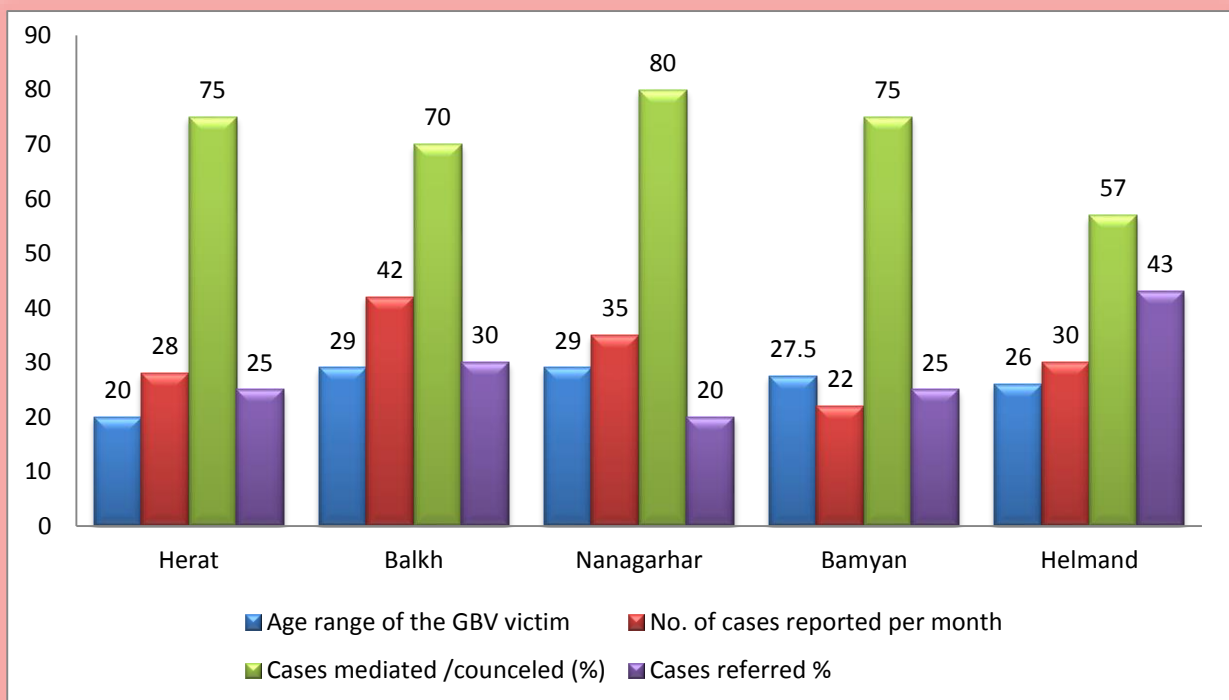
Barg-e-Sabz, is a quarterly magazine published by Balkh DoWA in past three years with ad hoc financial support of UNDP/GEP, GIZ and other international organizations. An impact assessment conducted during the reporting period reveal that the magazine has reached out to more than 1000 people and contributed significantly in raising awareness on the rights of women. The magazine contains messages on promoting women's rights. The target groups are the female and male population in the province who receive the copies of the magazine. The direct beneficiaries of the project are those who are literate and get access to the publications, and illiterate women and men who acquire the messages through the first group who will be benefited indirectly.

Feedback on the impact of the magazine show the following results:

- Raised awareness of Balkh citizens about women rights.
- Raised awareness about MoWA mandate and achievements towards women rights and empowerment.
- Enlightened Balkh citizens about governing laws and policies of government of Afghanistan in favor of women rights.
- Introduced other national and international organizations supporting gender equality in the country.
- Updated Balkh citizens about development and progress of economic empowerment of women.
- Informed Balkh citizens about women contribution in economic growth in the province.

### Indicator 3.2: Number of cases resolved by LHCs through institutionalized Referral Mechanism

We cannot remain silent regarding violence against women. A monthly average of reported cases at LHCs is about 30 to 40 cases; Herat approximately 200 - 250; Bamyan 20 -25 and Balkh 40 to 45 cases and in Dehdadi district 40 cases. These are striking conclusions from an unprecedented assessment conducted by GEP 11 for the existing LHCs during the period under review. Alarming, the results of the assessment show high level of acceptance of domestic violence among women. This data provides a clear picture of women and their unconscious state of oppression thereby posing a challenge on the need to invest more in behavior change campaigns. A lesson learnt is that while traditional attitudes remain deeply ingrained, LHCs are significantly contributing to mediation, cancelling and psychosocial support to women and prevent the haunted precincts of



memory violence. The details are shown in the table below.

The study provided the trends towards most prevailing cases of violence and age range of the victim registering the cases at LHCs.

Province	Prevailing GBV Cases	Age range of the GBV victim	No. of cases reported per month	Cases mediated /counseled (%)	Cases referred %
Herat	Drug addiction of husband and physical violence	15-35	200 - 250	75	25
Balkh	Physical Violence	18-40	40-45	70	30
Nangarhar	Domestic violence	18-40	30-40	80	20
Bamyan	Domestic violence and physical torture	15-40	20-25	75	25
Helmand	Domestic violence	17-35	25-35	57	43

In order to strengthen the referral and reporting system, GEP II led the coordination to harmonize the hotline services in the country. Several meetings were facilitated among key stakeholders that resulted in Afghanistan Capacity Development Education Organization (ACDEO) and AWN (Afghan Women Network) developing a draft MOU on provision of 6464 hotline services. Both parties agreed on their support. AWN will be helping ACDEO on referral of cases and ACDEO will receive calls through their call centers. The MoU is currently being reviewed by MOWA.

### Indicator 3.3: Number of religious leaders trained to advocate for women's rights in public

During the 1st Quarter of 2015 UNDP-GEP II supported the Women`s Rights Committee chaired by the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Leaders to convene. The committee is instrumental in developing and implementing women`s programmes supported by GEP II. A book on women`s rights in Islamic and international Law, master`s degree program for 16 cadres of key line ministries, six-day national conference for 101 religious leaders to discuss women`s rights have been some of the highlights of the decisions of WRSC Meetings. Committee members have identified prominent members well-known to social and media to advocate for women`s rights and these are engaging in national TV discussions such as National TV, Khurshid TV, Ariana TV, Shamshad TV, Zhwandoon TV, Noor TV, and Maiwand TV. These networks have vast coverage throughout the country. The second quarter will focus on monitoring the impact of the initiative.

A ground breaking initiative is that for the first time in Afghanistan, GEP II has succeeded in supporting the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Leaders to draft a book on Women`s Rights

from Islamic prospective under the leadership of the Women`s Rights Committee. The book is currently being edited after which it will be published once approved. A key challenge is the sensitivity of the issues being tackled by the book, as some closes relate to the Quran. This book will be published in 1,500 copies and will be distributed among school students, university students, lecturers, religious leaders and other government officials. The book will be used to train religious leaders to advocate for women's rights in public.

Sixteen prominent cadres of Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs, Ministry of Women`s Affairs, KU and the Science Academy of Afghanistan who are also members of the Women's Rights Steering Committee Meeting are being financially supported by GEP II to complete masters' programme in public law and gender and business administration at the University of Management, Economics and Finance (Swiss University of Afghanistan). Students of this master's degree program who are academics, trainers and government officials greatly use the content of the lessons in their daily lives. During the Women's Rights Steering Committee Meeting, members discussed that the recent knowledge they have obtained from the classes have contributed positively when delivering speeches, performing discussions and interviews on women`s rights issues.

Currently 20 students are benefiting from this program. Four other students are provided free scholarships by the University acknowledging UNDP's support for 16 cadres.

Mr. Sharafuddin Ansari, Religious affairs advisor for MoWA is one of the active students of the second semester of the Master's degree program at UMEF funded by GEP-II. In the first semester I studied fundamentals of public law, administrative law, basic law, leadership and elections law, and gender. It is worth mentioning that gender and leadership subjects are similar with cases of women leadership but in all subjects we have had discussions over women`s rights. Master`s degree is a specialized program which is adding to our knowledge in dealing with activities in our respective ministry in a more technical and academic fashion, particularly when we work on the policy and strategy of our respective ministries. It the cadres will have an open hand in the area of working effectively for women`s rights which means that by the end of this program.



Traditional and modern civil society institutions continue to play an important role in local dispute settlement in Afghanistan. The religious leaders trained last year (101 Mullahs) are supporting the gender equality and women's rights awareness in their respective provinces, as per the reports from MoHRA through the Friday Ceremonies. The participants of this 101 religious leaders program after 6-day training were assigned with an action plan to go to the 34 provinces of Afghanistan to advocate for women's rights from Islamic prospective. The action plans developed are monitored and evaluated by provincial directorates of Hajj and Religious Affairs which are eventually reported to Kabul. According to the statistics gathered from MOHRA in 2015, the Religious Leaders have been able to reach out to 60,000 audiences in the 34 provinces on women's rights in Islam. This is a continuous process and the number may increase.



Astounding results emerged in this quarter from the trainings delivered to religious leaders. One of the participants of the program by the name of Mawlawi Abdul Khalil who is a Mullah in Totakheil mosque of Khost province talks about his experiences during an interview conducted by GEPII.

Abdul Momin another participant of the training program from Faryab province of Afghanistan explains his experience as a Mullah of a mosque. He states that he learned what their role and responsibilities are. In the past they could only listen to programs, but after this program they learned what they could do. In several gatherings and sessions in different districts of Faryab province only in Friday prayers, 13,660 men and 630 female have been

An impact assessment conducted by GEP II in 2015 shows that one of the women leaders in Herat trained by GEP II last year Ms. Malika Rasouli conducted a mission to Badghis province to replicate the trainings. She conducted a four day awareness raising training for 80 school female students and teachers of 2 schools and 60 religious leaders in Qala Now city and Qadis districts on elimination of violence against women, importance of women's roles in family and society and women's rights. 5 separate trainings to 8 staff of DoWA Badghis and head of communities/influential people were conducted in Qala Now city and Qadis district (30 participants) resulting in the collection of information on women's status, existing resources and services for women, challenges, needs and role of these people in elimination of violence in the province. She added, this training was very useful and new for most of participants because 70% of them had not received this

The interesting part is that Mullah trained during 101 religious leaders training program are doing this job regardless of any salary or incentive from anyone. Whatever they preach is effective and acceptable and the good thing is they preach more on women's issues after the 101 training program.

### Indicator 3.4: Number of regional Peace and Security dialogues to enhance women participation in policy formulation and consensus building for peace dialogue

GEP II supported establishment of an Afghanistan Peace Network affiliate to the regional N PEACE last year. The result of this training was a communique that identified key issues and recommendations on women's participation in policy formulation and peace building.

Abdul Khalil says that he has convened several gatherings in Khost, Logar and Kabul provinces on women's right issues. In Khost province, he delivered a speech to almost 2,500 people on women's rights. The other gatherings he has convened throughout the course of his work, cover almost 5,480 people in different ceremonies, gatherings and Friday prayers. He explains that a man (Mohammad Arif a farmer) in Yaqoobi District of Khost province was beating his wife. Mr. Abdul Khalil intervened in the case by applying the knowledge he acquired during the trainings and succeeded in convincing Mohammad Arif that his wife had the rights like every other men. Further, in a case between two families on Mahr (Dowry) issue, using his knowledge from 101 religious leaders training program, he could resolve a dispute between the two families. He explained that he did not end here, but he followed up the cases and met families repeatedly to establish whether the Mahr of the women was really paid to her. Mr. Abdul Khalil says that Maryam a Madrasa student who is 20-year old studied until 7th grade. After his speech and teachings that it is important to get education, the girl requested Mr. Momin to meet her family and explained the importance of Education to her family. After meeting her parents and convincing them on their rights, now the girl is at 8 grades in school. He talks about another case where an 18-year old girl from Jawozjan province got married with Mohammad Nabi one of the residents of Faryab province. He explains that one day Mohammad Nabi (the husband) approached him and stated that they have two children and his wife argued that she was eager to continue her education. He asked whether he could allow his wife to continue her education knowing that other Mullahs considered this as a shameful act as she is married and that she cannot continue her education. Mawlawi Momin advised the husband to allow his wife to continue her education for education is a Farz (obligation). He explains that Mullahs attending 101 training

Ms. Anisa Imrani, DoWA director at Nangarhar, is now engaging in peace building process. As an achievement, recently she conducted site visits to 3 districts kama 30, Kuz Kunar 100, Dara-e-noor 60 of Nangarhar province where she trained 30,100 and 60 people respectively on peace building, management and dialogue. She is also taking leadership in coordinating the peace Shura.





## EXPENSES FOR THE QUARTER

Expenses incurred as of this quarter under pillar-III is USD 61,133. For further details, please see the Annex-II.

Below is a snapshot of where GEP-II in relation to its annual targets after Q1

Progress towards Output3:

2015 Baseline	2015 Annual Targets	Q1 Planned	Q1 Actual	Comments
Conducted and supported 13 awareness raising sessions/ campaigns at national and provincial level	13 awareness raising session in 2015 and the rest will be completed in 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarters	International Women's Day Celebration in 6 provinces and in Kabul	Supported provided to International Women's Day Celebration in 6 provinces and in Kabul	on-track
Completed the assessment of 12 LHCs in 4 target provinces	250 EAW cases reported and processed	Procurement and recruitment of WACs staff were planned in 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	Equipment is procured for WACs and the recruitment is at the interview stage	on-track
201 religious leaders trained and 16 cadres from line ministries have been supported for master's degree program to advocate for women's rights.	201 religious leaders trained and 16 cadres from line ministries have been supported for master's degree program to advocate for women's rights.	16 cadres from line ministries are currently taking classes at UMEF University	16 cadres are attending their classes at UMEF	on-track
N-Peace network had 31 members	31 N-Peace members implement their action plans and advocate with relevant authorities to implement Cinema Zainab Communique	Support implementation of 31 action plans and Cinema Zainab Communique	N-Peace members implemented their action plans in 2 target provinces supporting 558 DoWA staff, community members, religious leaders and school staff at Nangarhar and Herat regions on peace building process	On track



Women's Rights Steering Committee Meeting at MoWA, photo credit, Hassan, Legal Officer UNDP/GEP - March 2015

### III. GENDER SPECIFIC RESULTS

The project's three pillars aimed at improving the status of Afghan women across the key sectors, policy review and support, sustainable livelihoods, access to clean energy, justice and human rights and to mobilize emerging civil society in support of the women's empowerment and gender equality.

### IV. PARTNERSHIPS

No single entity will achieve gender equality; real progress requires mobilization with women and men, governments and businesses, civil society and the United Nations, working together. Strong partnerships foster ownership and promote sustainability. As a result, GEP II has managed to leverage project support through partner activities to achieve multiplier effects and costing savings. One of the added value generated by these partnerships is that government has been put in the driving seat working towards the socio-economic empowerment of women and ownership has improved. Partnership has been established with UN Women, UNFPA, UNHCR, FAO, WFP, Ministry of Public Health (MOPH), MAIL, UNDP Projects (SNPPMC, APRP, JHRA, Sustainable Development Unit), PWDCs, DAIL, National Environmental Protection Agency and Kabul Municipality.

Our strategic partnership with UN Women is in two areas: GRB and NAPWA. A cost sharing agreement was signed to develop the NAPWA MIS national centralized database. With the leadership of GEP II, NAPWA technical coordination mechanism was established comprising of UNFPA, UNHCR and UN Women, and Ministry of Public Health (MOPH). The partnership resulted in avoiding duplication of efforts and wastage of resources. It will also resulted in effective MIS for MOWA to produce reliable data, information and reports on NAPWA.

Partnership has been established with the SNPPMC Project of UNDP Afghanistan to provide support to the Gender Unit in the 2nd Vice President's Office. The collaboration has resulted in strengthening the tors of the Unit and linking the Unit to MOWA. The Gender Unit will provide support to the Sub Cabinet Committee on Gender.

The resources center of MOWA was linked with Kabul University and CISCO Academy. Around 20 students of CISCO Academy visited the resource center and the Kabul University management promised to strengthen the link between the center and the university students.

Project partnership was also forged with MoWA, DoWA, MAIL, and PWDCs, Sustainable development unit of UNDP, FAO, and WFP for rolling out joint activities in targeted provinces. MAIL provided 80 Jereb land for establishment of Innovative production, demonstration and training center in Kabul. Whereas WFP contributes

in assisting women in food security program. FAO provides agricultural inputs for 80 women including technically input. UNDP Sustainable unit leveraged co funding under GEF program.

In partnership with NEPA, UNDP Sustainable unit, MoWA and GEP is supporting 60 women for income generation through waste management in Kabul.

At the provincial level strong partnership has been established with Governors, in Herat the Governor facilitated in providing space and venue for the establishment of garment and BDS services for women in the women`s gardens.

Partnership has been established between GEP II and JHRA on Legal Aid Grant Facility and Afghanistan Independent Bar Association to strengthen the referral system of violence against women cases. In addition GEP II and JHRA are collaborating on broadcasting legal awareness messages on women`s rights through local radios in 5 provinces of Afghanistan;

Civil Society Organization partnership has also been fostered with Afghan Women Network for activation and operation of 6464 hotline services in order to provide Counselling, Mediation and Referral to women victims.

GEP II is collaborating with UNDP APRP Project on strengthening the N PEACE.

## V. ISSUES

- The lack of capacity and weak communication system in MoWA slows implementation of gender monitoring systems. GEP II staff are now closely working with the MOWA staff to provide on the job capacity building to implement GEP II activities.
- Good GRB experts are reluctant to come to Afghanistan for a period of six months, hence the recruitment process has been delayed. A national staff has been recruited and GEP II staff will provide the necessary technical backstopping in the interim.
- Pillar III was not able to carry some of the activities of MoHRA and MoWA due to budgetary constraints this year 2015. GEP II will continue to mobilise resources

## VI. RISKS

- Integration of gender in policies depend on Senior Officials, the new government was not in place during the period under review. A Sub Gender Cabinet Committee is being established to ensure compliance on implementation of gender commitments.
- National data is collected and led by the Central Statistical Office. NAPWA primary survey indicators will be included in the national survey which CSO will conduct; GEP has no full control of such process. Coordination mechanism will be established among MoWA, CSOs and Line Ministries to collect the baseline information on NAPWA implementation for the year 1394 (Afghanistan Calendar).
- Limited funds will constraint GEP II to implement all activities. Resource mobilization is ongoing with the potential donors to overcome the risk.

## VII. LESSONS LEARNED

- The time investment in lobbying, advocacy and literally pushing for the gender agenda is not negotiable if we are to successfully break from the male dominated systems.
- Using strategic champions and custodians of culture like religious leaders is paramount in advancing the women's agenda in Afghanistan.
- Beyond celebrations of women`s days it is key to continue to lobby for accelerated efforts to promote gender justice and adopt indicators for inclusion in national plans.
- Our findings are proving that income generating projects for women do not necessarily empower them, a holistic approach is required.
- There is no formula to produce results quickly - producing tangible results take longer time and efforts to enhance women confidence and abilities to bargain with their families in order to overcome gender discrimination practices deep rooted in their society.
- Building institutional capacities of women-led cooperatives require patience in terms of time and resources to realize results.
- In Afghanistan, CSO/NGOs are yet to be fully developed and are a high risk to engage them as partners to deliver results in agreed timeframe.
- It is important to understand the different dynamics new staff bring to an office and the importance of team building and project management. A project can be thrown off target due to changes in management.
- GRB is a long and systematic process that has to be implemented along with the budgeting cycle. Once the national budgeting cycle is missed, gender mainstreaming becomes a challenge which is the case in this instance. The non-systematic approach to GRB in the previous years will further delay realization of results.
- A systematic approach to institutionalizing gender studies is a key.

## VIII. FUTURE PLAN

### **Pillar-I priorities for the coming Quarter are as follows:**

1. Establishment of the Gender MIS;
2. Recruitment of international expert on data collection and data analysis;
3. Working with CSO on inclusion of NAPWA indicators in 2015 Annual Survey;
4. Initiating 2015 NAPWA report;
5. Support Kabul University to institutionalize gender studies;
6. Recruitment of National GSI consultant
7. Recruitment of national and international GRB consultants
8. Developing two concept papers for resource mobilization;
9. Preparing policy briefing of two ministries;
10. Support functionality of CSCG, GWG at ministry and provincial level;
11. Integration of policy recommendations in the policy of two ministries;
12. Support to WPDD of MOWA;

### **Pillar-II priorities for the coming Quarter are as follows:**

1. Data collection on key indicators of women's economic pillar and analysis.
2. Ensure fully functional production, processing, demonstration and training center.
3. Linking women entrepreneurs and Women-led Cooperatives with ICT center and support to enhance their ICT skills
4. Recruitment of local trainers for various income generating activities in target provinces
5. Recruitment of IC consultant to support Heart University ICT center and provide support to Nangarhar trainer.
6. Follow up and provide technical assistance to PWDC members in 11 provinces to ensure gender equality is addressed by rolling out their activities in coordination with governor office, DOWAs, Shuras and line departments
7. Assist Cooperatives, MoWA, DoWA and DAIL for inclusion and introduction and green and clean technology program in four provinces

### **Pillar-III priorities for the coming Quarter are as follows:**

- Continuing collecting information and data from the above programs;
- Establishing the WACs in five provinces and collecting data;
- Conduct follow up training program of 101 religious leaders;
- Participation in N-Peace working group meeting in Bangkok;
- Joint monitoring and reporting of GEP's contribution to Legal Aid Grant Facility with JHRA;
- Coordination with APRP to establish the Executive Board and the Secretariat for N-Peace;
- Follow up on PSA's produced by JHRA to be broadcasted in the target provinces;

## IX. ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: FINANCIAL TABLE

#### Donor Iterim Report for the period January - March 2015

Annex 1. Financial Table

Donor Name	COMMITMENT/ PREVIOUS YEARS RECORD				CURRENT YEAR - 2015					FUTURE EXPENSES		TOTAL RECEIVABLE		
	Commitment (a)	Revenue Collected 31/12/2014 (b)	Expenses 31/12/2014 (c)	IPSAS Adjustment/ Change(s) in Accounting Policy (d)	Opening Balance E=(b-c+d)	Contribution Revenue (f)	Other Revenue (g)	Expenses (h)	Closing Balance I=(e+f+g - h)	Commitments (Unliquidated Obligations) (j)	Undepreciated of fixed Assets and Inventory (k)	(Future Due) L=(a-b-f)	(Past Due) (m)	Available Resources N=(i - j - k-m)
Afghanistan (MOF)	224,466	224,466	140,325	-	84,141	-	-	5,077	79,064	3,783	-	-	-	75,281
CIDA	2,337,108	2,337,108	2,108,223	(57,439)	171,446	50,525	-	54,507	167,464	1,533	-	-	-	165,931
Italy	813,898	813,898	474,840	-	339,058	-	-	22,679	316,379	-	-	(0)	-	316,379
Korea	11,000,000	7,800,009	2,940,848	-	4,859,391	-	-	350,498	4,508,894	112,393	-	3,200,000	-	4,396,501
Denmark	106,000	106,000	46,923	-	59,077	-	-	5,918	53,160	-	-	-	-	53,160
UNDP Core	4,696,468	3,696,468	3,696,468	-	-	1,000,000	-	539,133	460,867	30,702	(5,506)	(0)	-	435,671
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19,177,940</b>	<b>14,977,949</b>	<b>9,407,627</b>	<b>(57,439)</b>	<b>5,513,114</b>	<b>1,050,525</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>977,811</b>	<b>5,585,828</b>	<b>148,411</b>	<b>(5,506)</b>	<b>3,200,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,442,923</b>

Note:

- i) Data contained in this report is an extract of UNDP financial records. The accounting period for the report is an open period and data from some accounting processes may not have been processed. Financial data provided above may not be complete, and it is provisional.
- ii) Income received in currency other than USD is approximated to USD based on UN- Operational Rate of Exchange applied.



## ANNEX 2: EXPENSES BY OUTPUT

### Donor Iterim Report for the period January - March 2015

#### Annex 2. Expenses by Output

Project Output ID and Description	2015Budget (AWP)	Total Expenses	Delivery Rate
Output 1 (ID: 00085178): MOWA's capacity of policy making and oversight of NAPWA Implementation improved.	2,251,562	291,479	13%
<b>Sub-total Output 1</b>	<b>2,251,562</b>	<b>291,479</b>	<b>13%</b>
Output 2 (ID: 00085152): Women's entrepreneurship skills developed for women entrepreneurs and cooperatives in 19 provinces.	1,530,187	209,092	14%
<b>Sub-total Output 2</b>	<b>1,530,187</b>	<b>209,092</b>	<b>14%</b>
Output 3 (ID: 00085146): Access to justice for women including awareness on women's rights among men & women increased.	1,297,732	61,133	5%
<b>Sub-total Output 3</b>	<b>1,297,732</b>	<b>61,133</b>	<b>5%</b>
Output 4 (ID: 00085179): Project Management Cost	1,467,519	416,107	28%
<b>Sub-total Output 4</b>	<b>1,467,519</b>	<b>416,107</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,547,000</b>	<b>977,811</b>	<b>15%</b>

## ANNEX 3: EXPENSES BY DONOR

### Donor Iterim Report for the period January - March 2015

#### Annex 3. Expenses by Donor

Donor Name	Project Output ID and Description	2015 Budget (AWP)	Total Expenses	Delivery Rates
Afghanistan (MOF)	Output 1 (ID: 00085178): MOWA's capacity of policy making and oversight of NAPWA Implementation improved.	84,000	5,077	6%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>84,000</b>	<b>5,077</b>	<b>6%</b>
CIDA	Output 1 (ID: 00085178): MOWA's capacity of policy making and oversight of NAPWA Implementation improved.	111,500	54,256	49%
	Output 3 (ID: 00085146): Access to justice for women including awareness on women's rights among men & women increased.	60,500	251	0%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>172,000</b>	<b>54,507</b>	<b>32%</b>
Italy	Output 1 (ID: 00085178): MOWA's capacity of policy making and oversight of NAPWA Implementation improved.	342,000	22,679	7%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>342,000</b>	<b>22,679</b>	<b>7%</b>
Korea	Output 1 (ID: 00085178): MOWA's capacity of policy making and oversight of NAPWA Implementation improved.	1,704,831	169,054	10%
	Output 2 (ID: 00085152): Women's entrepreneurship skills developed for women entrepreneurs and cooperatives in 19 provinces.	1,524,528	112,905	7%
	Output 3 (ID: 00085146): Access to justice for women including awareness on women's rights among men & women increased.	1,222,938	10,948	1%
	Output 4 (ID: 00085179): Project Management Cost	437,703	57,591	13%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>4,890,000</b>	<b>350,498</b>	<b>7%</b>

Denmark	Output 1 (ID: 00085178): MOWA's capacity of policy making and oversight of NAPWA Implementation improved.	9,232	1,803	20%
	Output 2 (ID: 00085152): Women's entrepreneurship skills developed for women entrepreneurs and cooperatives in 19 provinces.	5,659	-	0%
	Output 3 (ID: 00085146): Access to justice for women including awareness on women's rights among men & women increased.	14,294	-	0%
	Output 4 (ID: 00085179): Project Management Cost	29,816	4,115	14%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>59,000</b>	<b>5,918</b>	<b>10%</b>
UNDP	Output 1 (ID: 00085178): MOWA's capacity of policy making and oversight of NAPWA Implementation improved.	-	38,611	0%
	Output 2 (ID: 00085152): Women's entrepreneurship skills developed for women entrepreneurs and cooperatives in 19 provinces.	-	96,187	0%
	Output 3 (ID: 00085146): Access to justice for women including awareness on women's rights among men & women increased.	-	49,933	0%
	Output 4 (ID: 00085179): Project Management Cost	1,000,000	354,402	35%
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>539,133</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>6,547,000</b>	<b>977,811</b>	<b>15%</b>

Note:

i) The unbudgeted expenditures charged to UNDP will be adjusted by the 2nd quarter 2015.

## ANNEX 5: ISSUE LOG

#	DESCRIPTION	DATE IDENTIFIED	IMPACT/PRIORITY	COUNTERMEASURE/MNGT RESPONSE	OWNER	STATUS
1	The lack of capacity and weak communication system in MoWA slows implementation of gender monitoring systems	Jan-March	I= 3 P= 3	Web- based Database has been designed to update the M&E system of MoWA	Pillar-I	Continue
2	Kabul University requires a national consultant from the University who is familiar with the University curriculum development process. On the other hand, UNDP process will not allow recruitment of such as they are on government salary.	Jan-March	I=3 P=4	Coordination with HR office at CO has been carried out to solve the issue	Pillar-I	Continue
3	Good GRB experts are reluctant to sit in the MOF for a period of six months, hence the recruitment process has been delayed.	Jan-March	I=3 P=3	Coordination with HR office at CO has been carried out to solve the issue	Pillar-I	Continue
4	Pillar III was not able to carry some of the activities of MoHRA and MoWA due to budgetary constraints this year 2015	March	P=3 I=4	Resource mobilization was carried out with potential stakeholders	Project Management	Continue

## ANNEX 4: RISK LOG

#	DESCRIPTION	DATE IDENTIFIED	TYPE	IMPACT & PROBABILITY	COUNTERMEASURES/MNGT. RESPONSE	OWNER	SUBMITTED/UPDATED BY	LAST UPDATE	STATUS
1	Integration of gender in policies depend on Senior Officials, the new government was not in place during the period under review	Jan-March 2015	Management	I=4 P=3	Efforts have been geared by the pillar staff to consolidate the comments by AREAU on the policies of LM	Pillar-I	Pillar Head	March 2015	On-going
2	National data is collected and led by the National Statistical Office. NAPWA primary survey indicators will be included in the national survey which CSO will conduct, GEP has no full control of such process.	Jan-March 2015	Management	I=3 P=4		Pillar-I	Pillar Head	March 2015	On-going
3	Limited funds will constraint GEP to implement all activities.	Jan-March 2015	Govt. Commitment	I=4 P=3	Resource mobilization was carried out and the funds in AWP have been r-adjusted	Project Manager	Pillar Head	March 2015	On-going