

Women's Engagement Strategy: Khost Province



Khost CCM Meeting the Provincial Governor

Justice & Governance Eastern Afghanistan (JGEA)
(Logar, Khost, Paktia)

Khost Office CCM women engagement Strategy

Introduction:

Most development specialists agree that sustainable development is not possible without the full participation of both halves, female and male, of the Afghan population. The Khost CCM recommends and incorporate gender as a factor reflect a growing understanding of the absolute necessity for women's and men's full and equal participation in civil, cultural, economic, political and social life. Progress for women in Khost province will mean progress for all citizens, and women's status in Afghanistan can be an indicator of peace and security in the country.

Women participation on the CCM:

Khost CCM, has admitted, that they can have difficulty in addressing cases where a woman is a party or, more commonly, where a woman's interests are directly affected (implicated), in large part because (male) elders and religious figures themselves face high cultural barriers in even speaking to women disputants or other affected parties and as well as women sitting alongside men on the CCM in the current unstable situation in the area. However there is one active female CCM member on the Khost CCM to address women issues, but one woman alone would not dare to speak or act in front of 19 male members of the CCM, so there is need for a separate female CCM to be created in order to properly address the women issue in the province. Then male and female CCMs will both work in close coordination in resolving the conflicts.

The Khost CCM does not oppose the women engagement on the CCM. Moreover, All the CCM members suggested, that in order to empower women, and pay serious attention to their issues and rights, a separate CCM consisting 20 female members can be created for the time being, until the security situation improves in the area.

Main Challenges towards women in Khost province:

- I. the traditional patriarchal gender order
- II. the erosion of protective social mechanisms¹
- III. the lack of the rule of law
- IV. the poverty
- V. insecurity
- VI. lack of conflict resolution experience

¹ Social protection mechanisms are;

1. Provide income (cash) or consumption (food) to poor people.
2. Protect the venerable against livelihood risks.
3. Enhance the social status and rights of socially excluded and marginalized people (Women and etc.)

- VII. deeply rooted traditions of *pardah* (the segregation of women from men)

Khost CCM Recommendations

The Khost CCM is committed to support the government and non government institutions in order to improve the social status of women and protect their rights in the province, with the provisions of the following steps;

- I. Improvements in educational indicators for women and men (e.g., literacy, school attendance).
- II. Increased convictions in crimes against women investigated/prosecuted by Afghan institutions.
- III. Increased number of functioning women's outreach centers and shelters in Khost province
- IV. Provision of awareness related to women rights in the province
- V. Increased knowledge of women on conflict resolution
- VI. enforcement of laws protecting women, including the Elimination of Violence against Women law
- VII. Development in the number of women receiving credit, agriculture, and other income opportunities.

Next Steps

The Khost CCM will pave the way for *spinsari* (white hair Women) to have a meeting once a month, and one of their representatives will be in contact with our CCM, to point issues related to women as well as find ways for the solution of these issues and defend their rights. In order to empower women and pay serious attention to their issues and rights, a separate CCM consisting of 20 female members can be created in Khost province. In the beginning the female CCM will need some funding until their capacity is increased in conflict resolution, and then they will continue by their own. The Khost CCM will support and hold meetings twice a month, to share issues related to women with the civil society to advocate women rights and monitor the enforcement of laws and policies protecting women rights. The Khost CCM will also have a meeting once a month with prosecutors to help in sharing information, if they need any of help of the CCM members. The Khost CCM will also support other government and non government institutions, which provide civil service opportunities for women in the province.