



USAID | **AFGHANISTAN**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

YEAR 4 VOLUNTEER REPORT

August 2013

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by the advisor(s) supporting USAID's Economic Growth and Governance Initiative. The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Author

Nahid Alifi
Women in Government Team Lead
USAID/EGGI

Date	Document Version	Document Revision Description	Document Author
8/28/2013	1	Submitted to USAID	Nahid Alifi

Disclaimer

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Women in Government Volunteer Program Overview	4
Volunteer Program Goal	4
Volunteer Program Objectives	4
Volunteer Program Themes.....	4
Volunteer Program Outcomes	4
Women in Government Volunteer Activities in Kabul.....	5
Presentations at Lame Shaheed High School and Mehrabuddin High School	5
Volunteer Event at Dar ul Aman Farm	5
Volunteer Event at Badaam Baagh Farm	6
Women in Government Volunteer Activities in the Provinces	7
Balkh Province – Donations for Needy Women	7
Herat Province – Volunteer Event at Khwaja Abdullah Ansari Orphanage	7
Nangarhar Province – Presentations at BiBi Hawa Girls High School	7
Challenges and Lessons Learned	8
Challenges.....	8
Lessons Learned	8

Women in Government Volunteer Program Overview

As part of the Economic Growth and Governance Initiative (EGGI) project, the Women in Government Internship Program was established in February 2010 to offer exposure and work experience to recent female graduates. Internships are four to six months in length, and the ultimate goal of the internship program is to help the interns develop key professional skills and to support them to obtain full-time employment. In Year 4 of the EGGI project, the Women in Government internship program provided 256 internships in Kabul, Balkh, Herat, and Nangarhar, significantly expanding program activities from previous years:

- Kabul (166 interns),
- Balkh (20 interns),
- Herat (40 interns)
- Nangarhar (30 interns).

Volunteerism is a key aspect of the Women in Government Internship Program, as it helps interns understand the importance of giving back to their community, learn how to interact with different people, and build confidence. In Year 4 of the EGGI project, the Women in Government team continued to provide volunteer opportunities to interns and expanded the Women in Government volunteer activities in coordination with the Women in Development Association (WIDA). The Women in Government volunteer program became more formalized and expanded to also provide volunteer opportunities to interns in the provinces. In coordination with WIDA, the Women in Government team outlined the goals, objectives, and themes for the updated volunteer program.

Volunteer Program Goal

The overall goal of the Women in Government volunteer program is to promote youth volunteerism.

Volunteer Program Objectives

The objectives of the Women in Government volunteer program are to:

- Provide each Women in Government intern with an opportunity to participate in a volunteer activity.
- Help build a culture of volunteerism by providing young women with volunteer opportunities and preparing them to help others in their time of need.
- Promote environmental protection by engaging young women in environmental clean up activities.
- Promote teamwork among young women volunteers.
- Promote sports among young women.
- Help formally launch WIDA activities by working together to promote volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Program Themes

In coordination with the Women in Development Association, the Women in Government team planned volunteer activities in Kabul and the provinces along several themes:

- Theme A: Let's Keep the Environment Clean
- Theme B: Go Green Let's Keep the Environment Clean
- Theme C: Help the Poor, Donations to the Poor
- Theme D: Ladies Friendly Football Match

Volunteer Program Outcomes

- Formal launch of WIDA social activities.
- 202 interns participated in 7 volunteer activities in Kabul, Balkh, Herat, and Nangarhar.
- Moral and financial support provided to poor women.
Volunteer activities featured by local media.

Women in Government Volunteer Activities in Kabul

During Year 4, 153 Women in Government interns participated in four volunteer activities in Kabul. In the first quarter of Year 4, the Women in Government team continued a series of volunteer activities with local schools in Kabul that began in Year 3. After WIDA was launched in February 2013, the Women in Government team worked with WIDA to identify themes for joint volunteer activities and held two volunteer events in the third quarter of Year 4.

Presentations at Lame Shaheed High School and Mehrabuddin High School

On October 11, 2012, five interns developed and delivered presentations at Lame Shaheed High School. The first presentation covered hygiene and cleanliness, and the second presentation focused on the role of sports and exercise in health and nutrition. On November 8, 2012, six interns organized and delivered presentations on hygiene and cleaning up the environment to a group of 9th – 11th grade female students at Mehrabuddin High School in Kabul. These presentations were part of a series of Women in Government volunteer activities that began in Year 3 of the project, with a different group of interns participating in each event.

Volunteer Event at Dar ul Aman Farm

In coordination with WIDA, the Women in Government program organized a volunteer event on April 23 at Dar ul Aman Farm in Kabul under Theme B: Go Green. During this volunteer event, 72 Women in Government interns planted seeds and saplings at the Dar-ul-Aman farm in Kabul. The Dar ul Aman Farm is owned by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (MAIL) and is located to the south of Kabul. The farm is leased 80 poor widows for a period of five years and is managed by the Directorate of Home Economy. This event was led by a group of interns in collaboration with the Horticulture and Livestock Project (HLP) and the Directorate of Home Economy. The volunteer event was based on the slogan “Go Green,” and over 180 participants took part in the volunteer event, including women farmers, Home Economy Directorate officials, HLP officials, and Women in Government interns.

Event Participants:

- 80 women farmers
- 72 Women in Government interns
- 20 WIG Staff members
- 10 Directorate of Home Economy staff
- 6 HLP staff
- 1 USAID Project Management Specialist (Hakima Hakimi)

Media:

- Tolo News
- MAIL Media Team

The Director of Home Economy stated, “The purpose of the activity was to encourage farmer women and mobilize the interns in agricultural activities.” The Directorate of Home Economy facilitated following activities;

- Prepared land layouts, double digging the land and plotting
- Invited female farmer beneficiaries
- Irrigated the land
- Invited the media

The Senior Orchard Management Officer from the HLP said, “We see this event as a platform for future collaboration between the organizations involved in this volunteerism activity”. HLP facilitated following activities:

- Provided vegetable seeds, saplings, and seedlings



- Provided gardening equipment
- Provided female trainers to orient participants to the volunteer activity

The Women in Government team facilitated the following activities:

- Prepared banner for volunteer event
- Provided refreshments for all participants
- Provided Go Green scarves for volunteers

Volunteer Event at Badaam Baagh Farm

On May 11, 2013, the Women in Government team organized a volunteer event at Badaam Baagh Farm in Kabul in coordination with WIDA and MAIL under Theme A: Let's Keep the Environment Clean. The volunteer activity was based on the slogan "let's clean up and green up," intended to help the interns develop an understanding of planting, irrigation, and agricultural activities. A total of 90 participants attended the volunteer event, including 70 interns, Women in Government team members, and MAIL representatives. The interns cleared weeds and bushes from the ground and prepared the soil for seeding and irrigation.

Women in Government Volunteer Activities in the Provinces

In response to the expansion of the internship program to Balkh, Herat, and Nangarhar provinces, the Women in Government team expanded its volunteer activities to the provinces. In Year 4, 49 interns participated in three volunteer opportunities in Balkh, Herat, and Nangarhar provinces under Theme C: Help the Poor, Donations to the Poor.

Balkh Province – Donations for Needy Women

In April, 20 interns in Balkh province worked with the Directorate of Women's Affairs (DoWA) in Mazar to raise money for two poor women working as cleaners at the DoWA. The team raised 3,000 AFN for the women.

Herat Province – Volunteer Event at Khwaja Abdullah Ansari Orphanage

In June, 19 interns volunteered at Khwaja Abdullah Ansari Orphanage, a government entity in Herat that supports 90 girls. The slogan for the event was "Hold on, the Pain will End," and the interns delivered a presentation on self-confidence and donated school bags and fans to the orphanage. A total of 60 participants attended the event including interns, girls, representatives from the orphanage, and Women in Government team members.

Nangarhar Province – Presentations at BiBi Hawa Girls High School

In April 2013, 10 Women in Government interns in Nangarhar conducted a volunteer health and hygiene class for 20 students at the BiBi Hawa Girls High School in Jalalabad. Students across all classes attended the event and learned about health issues, good hygiene, and disease prevention.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges

Although the Women in Government internship program was successful in providing interns with volunteer opportunities, the Women in Government team faced several challenges in implementing these volunteer opportunities:

- Volunteer activities were rescheduled frequently due to security concerns.
- The final volunteer event under Theme D: Ladies Friendly Football match was cancelled due to security concerns after being rescheduled several times. Fifteen interns formed a football team to play against the Afghan National Football Ladies team in a friendly match and began practicing. After the event was cancelled, the clothing purchased for the match was donated to the players from the Afghan National Football Ladies team.

Lessons Learned

The Women in Government team identified several lessons learned that can be applied to future volunteer programs:

- For activities related to the environment and conducted outside, weather forecasts should be checked in advance.
- Media should be invited to volunteer events to help promote volunteerism with other youth.
- Throughout the program, a charity fund or donation account should be created which should be used to help poor and needy in time of needs.