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Kabul Municipality Women Council Annual Report

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Table of Contents

Background	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Objective of the Women Council Establishment	3
Part-I: Women Leadership Council Election	4
Part-II: Introduction of the Leadership Council Members	4
Part-III: Providing Winter uniforms for KM Female Contractor based Employees.....	5
Part-IV: Women’s Role in the City Sanitation	5
Part-V: Celebrating the International Women’s Day (8th of March).....	6
Part-VII: Women Council’s Promotional Materials.....	6
Part-VI: Capacity Building Programs for Women.....	7
Part VIII: Women Economic participation in the CITY	8
Part VIII: Coordination with Civil Society Organizations	8
Part-IX: Service Delivery for women in KM and the CITY.....	9
Part-IX: Conducting Council’s Monthly Meetings	9

Background

In order to ensure gender equality and women active participation in the leadership of Kabul Municipality, and to meet the government commitments in the Constitution, National Development Strategy, National Action Plan for Women, Afghan government's national and international commitments for women's rights and gender equality, KCI in coordination with Kabul Municipality took the initiative of conducting a general, confidential, and independent election among all female workers whose number is reaching 410 female permanent and contract employees to establish Women Council. Through this election and based on KM approved procedure the following elections have been made:

- One person as the head of the Women Council
- Two women as deputies, and
- 12 others as council members

Kabul City Initiative Project of USAID has put in efforts and advocated for pushing this issue through the Mayor's approval and support. KCI is still providing continuous technical support to women council and many other women focused projects are being financed and supported by KCI to support KM fulfill its commitments on Gender and Women Rights.

Objective of the Council Establishment

Kabul Municipality Women Council aims to promote women employees in KM to achieve equality in all aspects of their career and to ensure their active participation in the leadership and decision making level.

The mission of the council is to express the needs of KM female employees. This council will support fundamental and human rights of all female staff in KM. The Women Council attempts and assists KM employees in implementation of Municipality's law, policies, procedures, and regulations, and work to highlight women needs and advocate for necessary actions accordingly.

Part-I: Women Council Election

The Women Council was established in October 2011 for the first time in the history of Kabul Municipality through a general election, where 8 women run for the elections. Head of the council was elected successfully by obtaining 91 votes, first deputy obtained 38, and second deputy obtained 19 votes.

Following the Council members' election, an internal committee was formed to review the procedure and terms of reference for the council. The committee finalized and approved the relevant procedures and terms of reference for the council after receiving comments from the members.



Part-II: Introduction of the Women Council Members

The Women Council of Kabul Municipality is consisted of 15 members, three members are elected, and the rest 12 of them are selected by H. E. the Kabul Mayor. Initially KM women council has been introduced to all the female employees of KM through a gathering followed by the elections. This gathering was the first one ever in KM where women presented their recommendations, concerns and ways to improve women situation not only at KM, but also to include women concerns in the city services.

Part-III: Providing Winter Uniforms for KM Female Contract based Employees

Women Council after conducting need assessment of the female contract based employees, decided to provide winter and spring uniforms for the employees in order to bring disciplinary provisions amongst women contract based employees (Cleaners, Cooks and Tea ladies) and fulfill their request for winter clothes.

It is worth mentioning, that the Women Council assumes the responsibility to monitor the employees and assure that they use their uniform on regular basis.

Part-IV: Women’s Participation in the City Services and Sanitation

To encourage women participation in city services, KM women council initiated to conduct a volunteer sanitation work or a clean-up campaign in District 10 of Kabul City. This event was coordinated with many civil society organizations, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Red Crescent Society and the Afghan Women Network. Nearly 400 women including KM employees, women rights activists, volunteers, house wives, even the district residence including shopkeepers and other people participated in this activity. As a result of the activity 112 M3 solid wastes were collected from the area in district 10th. The aim of this clean-up campaign was to encourage the area residents, highlighting women’s role in the city services and promote urban culture among the people.



Part-V: Celebrating the International Women's Day



Women Council for the first time was handed over the responsibility of preparation for celebrating the IWD city wide. The women council was the host for 18000 guests from around the Kabul City in Babur Garden.

To honor the outstanding performances by women during the

year, 23 female employees of KM were privileged with an appreciation certificate from the Mayor on their achievements for Kabul Municipality. The program contained women's business campaign, a concert of a famous female singer and advocacy campaign to promote women participation in city services.



Part-VII: Women Council's Promotional Materials

As part of the promotion of the women council and to introduce the council



members to other social networks, the council has designed and published an introduction booklet and distributed them to all departments and organizations. Meanwhile to promote women's participation in the city services other promotional material like brochures, posters, billboards, and note books having messages highlighting women's participation in city services have been

produced in order to promote the women council and its activities.

Part-VI: Capacity Building Programs for Women



Knowing the fact that women have mostly been deprived from opportunities in the workplace, capacity building has been a major issue where women presence have not been very significant in the KM, therefore to fill this gap, women council proposed designing women exclusive program that could enhance women capacity within KM. Therefore, with the support of KCI,

women Council managed to conduct two long term training programs for 50 employees.

The women Engineers/Professionals training held for 25 women professionals for a period of 6 months. The course included topics like:

1. Functions of Management
2. Project Management
3. Monitoring and Evaluation
4. Decision Making
5. Time Management
6. Contract Management
7. Communication, including various types of communication
8. Report Writing (how to write reports, types and contents of reports)
9. Proposal Writing
10. Policy development mechanisms (both theoretical and practical)
11. Human Resource Management



The women Leadership skills development training held for 25 women working as mid-level managers for a period of 4 months, the course included the topics like:

1. Public Speaking and Negotiation Skills
2. Leadership and its principles
3. Workplace violence avoidance
4. Municipal law and its responsibilities

Part VIII: Women Economic participation in the CITY



To encourage women participation in economic spheres in the city, and promote the products afghan women business owners produce, Women Council of KM and the Gender Section of KCI initiated the idea to launch short term women bazars around the city in all districts' public parks. This aims not only to help women small business

owners access the public parks, but also to find relevant customers for their products. This activity's end result that we foresee is to encourage women legalize their businesses and as a result of that, a women permanent market would be established to ensure their participation in the social affairs of the city. So far during the 2nd year of KCI, 10 events have been successfully held and are well-appreciated both by the citizens and by the business women.



Part VIII: Coordination with Civil Society Organizations

KM women council 's one of the major tasks is to connect to the women social networks in order to support women council issues and find synergies to work together; therefore, Women council could establish significant coordination mechanisms with civil society organizations such as Afghan Women Network (AWN), Red Crescent Society, Afghan Women Council and Afghan Women Educations Rights Program. So far as a result of certain coordination with civil society, KM women council managed to seek support of the CSOs for capacity building ideas like enrolling women employees from KM into a AWN funded driving course program, or attendance of women into public meetings held by CSOs

Part-IX: Service Delivery for women in KM and the CITY



The toilet in KM selected for renovation only for women

Women participation in service delivery for women as the target groups is another major issue that needs a lot of consideration. KM women council recently conducted a survey of the 37 public toilets in the city in order to identify the problems existing in these toilets and find ways to help the employees of KM working there.

Meanwhile, due to the fact that there were no toilets for women in KM, it was negotiated with the high officials of KM in order to specify at least two toilets, so that they are renovated and maintained only for the use of women inside the main building of KM. The work is still on-going and will be soon operational and ready for us.

Conducting Council's Monthly and Quarterly General Meetings



The women Council of KM are meeting every other week to discuss several work related issues and issues of major concern for women. These meetings basically highlight the previous week's achievements and the next weeks' work plan. Normally the meetings are chaired by the Head of the women Council and minutes are recorded accordingly.

KM Women Council also conducts quarterly meetings with all female employees of KM in order to report on their achievements and include women needs into KM agenda and advocate for their rights.