



German Cooperation with Afghanistan

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Women's Rights Conference in Mazar-e Sharif

Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh, 9th August 2018 – Yesterday, a conference on women's rights took place in Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh. More than 200 people attended the event. Participants included madrassa teachers and students, local elders, mullahs as well as representatives of the provincial government, media and civil society. The Afghan-German Cooperation's programme for strengthening the rule of law in Afghanistan (RoL) supported Balkh's Department of Education and Department of Haj and Religious Affairs in implementing the activity.

An attending madrassa teacher, Ms Fariza Sofizada, commented: "This conference will enhance women's knowledge about their rights. We are thankful for this opportunity."

The activity aimed at encouraging discussions about women's rights. Various government officials and Islamic scholars held speeches on relevant topics. These included women's inheritance rights according to Islam, the right to alimony and the Hijab, women's social and economic rights as well as family rights and political rights. Female and male professors teaching at madrassas (religious schools) held speeches, too. The conference ended with a lively question-and-answer session.

Another participant, the Islamic scholar Mr Mawlawi Mohammad Hanafi, emphasised: "Conducting such conferences is very important for improving as they give us a chance to learn. Citizen's legal awareness will be increased when it comes to women's rights in our society."

A similar conference shall take place in Kabul soon. About 100 participants from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs are expected to attend.

The programme Promotion of the Rule of Law in Afghanistan (RoL) is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The programme aims at ensuring the rule of law, a well-functioning judicial system and legal security in Afghanistan. To ensure legal security for all citizens, RoL has been supporting so-called Huquq bureaus which handled more than 77,000 civil cases since 2013. In the same time, to support higher legal education, RoL provided more than 30,000 books to law and sharia faculties, organised more than 150 courses on legal topics for students and lecturers and awarded more than 60 students with scholarships. RoL further trained almost 13,000 police staff to carry out duties according to law. The programme also emphasises promoting women's rights and strengthening their access to justice as well as the job market.