



German Cooperation with Afghanistan

+++ Press Release +++

Increasing Women's Participation in the Extractive Sector

Kabul, 14th March 2019 – Yesterday, the Afghan Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP) conducted an event themed 'Increased Participation of Women in the Extractive Industry' related to International Women's Day. The activity brought together female entrepreneurs from the Afghan Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AWCCI) and the Afghanistan Chamber of Industries and Mines (ACIM) to facilitate exchange and cooperation. A particular focus was on how to promote women's participation in the Afghan extractive sector. About 120 people, 100 of them women, participated. The Afghan-German Cooperation supported the event.

High-ranking officials attended the event, including the Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum, Ms Nargis Nehan, the Deputy Minister of Admin and Finance, Mr Rabani, and the ministry's Head of Gender and Human Resources. Minister Nehan emphasised, 'The role of women in each governmental and non-governmental organisation should change from symbolic nature into an active, qualitative, nature.'

The number of women working in the Afghan extractive sector remains low. However, to fully leverage its potential for Afghanistan's sustainable economic development, women's labour and expertise are needed. Today's event was therefore a welcome opportunity for participants to identify and discuss job and business opportunities for women in the mining industries.

The Afghan government intends for more women to work in the economy and especially in technical jobs. However, out of 300 women currently employed by the MoMP, only 25 are technical staff with a relevant bachelor's degree – and they do not have any role in decision-making processes. Therefore, the MoMP is currently working on a gender policy that shall facilitate women's participation at the ministry. As a step in this direction, 13 female MoMP staff received their bachelor certificates at the event and were motivated to apply for key positions in the ministry.

One of the graduates, Ms Nooria Babakarkhail, commented, 'With my bachelor degree I feel more confident and fully eligible to apply for higher leadership positions at MoMP. Developing our capacities are the only way to work at positions on decision-making level.'

The programme Promoting Good Governance in the Extractive Sector in Afghanistan is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). To fully leverage the Afghan mining sector's potential, the programme aims at increasing state revenues, promoting investment and fighting corruption in the sector. The project trains stakeholders to ensure that mining activities are carried out transparently and according to law as well as international health and environmental standards. Among other activities, the project has implemented 26 training courses on topics such as mine planning, mining economics and mining supervision for more than 380 mining inspectors and other employees at the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP) and provincial authorities since 2014. At the same time, the programme has financed 13 scholarships for Afghan women to promote female participation in the sector. The programme further supports the Afghan Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (AEITI) to promote transparency and fight corruption.