



Global Call T Action Against Poverty (GCAP)  
Afghanistan collation  
International Women Day Celebration

**Venue:** Murwaried Hotel's Hall, Kabul, Afghanistan

**Date:** March, 9, 2008

**Time:** 09:00 am – 01:20 pm

**Organizer:** GCAP-Afghanistan members (Action Aid Afghanistan, ARE, CCA, ECW, GRSP, MOVE & SDO)

**Participants:** Civil society organizations, representatives from Ministry of Women Affairs and other ministries, parliament members, women society actors, youth groups, private sector representatives

**Background**

Afghan women continue to be one among the worst off in the world, especially in Measures of health, poverty, deprivation of rights and protection against violence, education and literacy, and public participation. Afghan women die at least 20 years younger than other women in the world.

Afghanistan ranks far below its neighbors with respect to literacy, especially for adult females, whose 14.1% literacy rate is three times worse than that of men.

Afghanistan and Afghan women fall at the bottom of global poverty indices - with a Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.346 and a Gender Development Index (GDI) value of 0.300, ranking Afghanistan as 5th and 3rd lowest in standard of living and gender disparity in standard of living, respectively, in the world.<sup>4</sup> Women represent some 30 percent of agricultural workers, are engaged in livestock, micro enterprise, and home industries but have limited access to capital, information, technology and markets.

Although some progress has been noted in women's participation in public life, they still constitute a minority and are often marginalized in policy and decision making. Women continue to experience violence and threats of violence at home and in public spaces. There is a general lack of awareness of women's rights and certain vestiges of inequality remain in some laws of the country.

Violence against women is pervasive in Afghanistan and has its roots in the low status of women combined with long exposure to hostilities and conflict. It is a major obstacle in achieving gender equality and a silent epidemic. It needs to be overcome through multiple efforts such as the rule of law, awareness creation,

and changing cultural practices and mindsets. Above all it requires political commitment and leadership at the highest levels to take actions which will positively impact on meeting the rights of women.

By allocating 25% of seats in the Parliament to women, Afghanistan has taken steps to bring about gender parity in the representation of women in decision-making. This needs to be followed by similar steps at the sub-national level and their effective participation in decision-making at all levels.

### **Celebration of International Women's Day**

International Women's Day was celebrated on March, 9, 2008 by GCAP-Afghanistan coalition in Murwaried hotel's hall of Kabul city - Afghanistan

The main purpose of the gathering was to mobilize the women to advocate for their rights and To draw attention of the key government people and policy makers to pay attention to improvement of the life conditions of Afghan women and to give incentives for providing job opportunities, education facilities and women empowerment programs in Afghanistan.

Prior to the celebration of the International Women's Day , Banners were already prepared and placed in the crowded parts of Kabul city.

The banners included slogans , sayings and quotations, all of which were focused on the main problems of Afghan women , their demand from the government and international community.



Civil society organizations, representatives from Ministry of Women Affairs and other ministries, parliament members, women society actors, youth groups, private sector representatives and many others attended the gathering.

The gathering consisted of speeches from government's representative, members of parliament, women's representatives and representatives from GCAP-Afghanistan coalitions, songs and stage shows all of which were focused on the current life conditions of women in Afghanistan.

The following people from different organizations had speech in the gathering

- Dr.Massoda Jalal former Minister of Women Affairs
- Mrs.Habiba Danish , member of Afghanistan Parliament
- Mr.Raz Mohammad Dalili, member ( SAFG) of GCAP and Executive Director of Sanayee Development Organization ( SDO)
- Mrs. Shagul Rizaie, member of Afghanistan Parliament and member ( SAFG) of GCAP-Afghanistan.
- Mr. Noor Moahammad Wafel Mohmand deputy minister of Ministry of Labour Affairs



The presenters highlighted the root causes of the main problems Afghan women are faced with, obstacles which prevent their active participation in the development of the country.

The presenters also pointed out the key measures that have to be taken by the government and policy makers to improve the life conditions of Afghan women who currently experience violence,





have no access to education, basic health services, justice and other rights. They also stressed that equality and justice are the rights of every citizen in the country regardless of the gender and there should be more space provided for women to raise their voices and have access to justice.

The gathering followed by short stage shows and songs and it was closed with reading of GCAP message and women message to the key government people and policy makers.



The Dupty minister of Social and Labour Affairs , in the middle, taking notes of a speech





Stage show