

**PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
IDENTIFICATION/CONCEPT STAGE**

Report No.: PIDC108551

Project Name	Women's Economic Empowerment National Priority Program
Region	SOUTH ASIA
Country	Afghanistan
Lending Instrument	IPF
Project ID	P163267
Borrower Name	Ministry of Finance
Implementing Agency	Minister of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
Environment Category	C - Not Required
Date PID Prepared	04-Feb-2017
Estimated Date of Approval	
Initiation Note Review Decision	The review did authorize the preparation to continue

I. Introduction and Context

Country Context

The Government's National Peace and Development Framework presents the overall strategy for helping women fully realize their Constitutionally protected rights and potentials. The National Priority Programme on Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE-NPP) is the third pillar of this national strategy.

Afghanistan's Constitution guarantees equal citizenship rights for women, but ending women's socioeconomic marginalization and increasing their engagement with markets is also critical for reducing poverty. The government is proposing five pillars for making its gender strategy operational. Each pillar is grounded in a cross-government action programme.

- (ç Implementing our global commitments on women's human rights, security and freedom from domestic violence;
- (ç Ensuring full access to education and health services, including to higher education;
- (ç Launching the Women's Economic Empowerment National Priority Programme;
- (ç Ensuring constitutional rights for women through the full execution of our laws; and
- (ç Advancing women in government and business.

Social, economic, legal and security-related constraints on women's mobility pose a key barrier to women's economic participation. Without facilitation of greater freedom of movement by government, women will continue to face difficulties in accessing facilities such as banks, markets, or transportation; monitoring their products; or moving up the value chain by managing processing, finishing, or other value adding activities. Barriers to women's increased mobility range from cultural restrictions to the lack of physical infrastructure, to regulatory problems such as centralized registrations that would force women to travel to distant centres.

The WEE-NPP will work to reduce mobility barriers. Some mobility problems can be solved from within the NPP itself, such as simplifying the procedures to register women's cooperatives so that they no longer have to make long journeys. But others will require coordination with other NPPs such as the infrastructure, private sector, and agricultural NPPs to make women-friendly investments and reforms. In the Citizens' Charter, for example, urban communities have used community funds to provide streetlights so that in winter months women can still go to their jobs safely. Highway planners are also being given guidance to include safe restrooms for women at periodic intervals in road network design documents.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

The National Priority Program on Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE-NPP) builds poor women's capacity to strengthen the economy of their households, communities, and the entire nation. It provides start-up technical and financial resources to support women-owned businesses, and development of job skills, and financial literacy. These investments will primarily complement and be delivered through the Citizens' Charter, the Agriculture National Priority Program, and the Human Development National Priority Program. The program aims to create an enabling environment for women's economic empowerment through policy and planning reforms that will remove legal barriers to women's economic participation; streamline and reduce regulatory barriers to women's involvement in marketing; and improve the quality and use of gender statistics for planning and monitoring women's economic progress.

Overall coordination of this NPP is through the Human Capital Development Council. Additionally, provincial governors and councils provide regional coordination and support, while Islamic scholars, traditional leaders, and community development councils provide guidance and support for the programme throughout.

Relationship to CAS/CPS/CPF

The starting point for the Women's Economic Empowerment National Priority Programme (WEE-NPP) is the Constitution of Afghanistan, which guarantees equal rights for women and men. But translating that constitutional commitment into normal practices requires looking closely at the constraints blocking realization of that goal. The WEE-NPP concentrates on the constraints limiting women's economic participation. But economic participation is not sufficient by itself – it would be quite impossible to increase women's participation in poorly paid and oppressive working conditions without in any way improving their access to those constitutional rights. For this reason, the focus of the WEE-NPP is to support economic participation as a means to increase women's agency in development.

II. Project Development Objective(s)

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Objective of the NPP is to advance women's agency, autonomy, and well being by expanding women's access to economic resources.

Key Results

Increasing the Availability and Analysis of Gender Statistics;
 Removing Legal Barriers to Participation;
 Training in Literacy, Business Management and Labor Skills;
 Improving Inclusive Access to Finance;
 Improving Access to Agricultural Inputs, Extension Services, and Markets;
 Promoting Access to Creative Economy Markets

III. Preliminary Description

Concept Description

IV. Safeguard Policies that Might Apply

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No	TBD
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01			x
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04			x
Forests OP/BP 4.36			x
Pest Management OP 4.09			x
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11			x
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10			x
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12			x
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37			x
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50			x
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60			x

V. Financing (in USD Million)

Total Project Cost:	4.999999	Total Bank Financing:	0
Financing Gap:	0		
Financing Source			Amount
Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund			4.999999

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