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## SCA Calendar

### AUGUST

01. SCA SG ARRIVING  
AFGHANISTAN
02. DEADLINE 2nd DRAFT  
SCA STRATEGIC PLAN
12. UN INTERNATIONAL  
YOUTH DAY
20. AFGHAN ELECTION
22. RAMAZAN-UL-  
MUBARAK
31. SIDA FINAL REPORT

# Positive signs for mothers and child's health in rural areas

**The number of midwives in Afghanistan is increasing which will contribute to reducing the mother and child mortality rate.**

Comparing present to the past few years, more progress has been made in decreasing the mother and child mortality ratio.

According to UNICEF, the number of pregnant women in rural areas of Afghanistan, who received assistance from a doctor, nurse or midwife for safe delivery increased from 6% in 2003 to 18.9% in the recent years.

Midwives in clinics and health facilities are crucial for the pregnant women. Therefore the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan provides midwifery trainings to the women in Wardak and Paktika provinces at the Wardak Project Office (WPO) in Maidan Shahr.

**The students** have men from their families escorting them. These male are also hired as employees in different positions at the school and other SCA facilities in Wardak province.

"This is a great opportunity that I have my family member here with me. This increases the chance for other women and encourages the villagers to come and attend the training as well" says Parwin from Chack district at SCA's midwifery



**Safe.** A newly born baby being vaccinated at the SCA supported hospital in Maidan Shahr, Wardak. The presence of the midwives in the hospitals and clinics in the rural areas providing pre-natal care, Afghan mothers and their baby's chances for a safe delivery has increased.

training centre. She is one of the 23 young women currently being trained at the fourth round of the midwifery training.

**At first many** villagers were opposing the participation of the young women in the midwifery training. The same families now seek help from the high officials to support their women in their communities which will enable them to attend the training. The families understand the value of female in the medical field.

The students are all from the far districts of Wardak and Paktika provinces therefore they are offered a hostel next to the centre. The trainees who have small children can keep their children at the Swedish committee's nursery in its Wardak project office.

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## NDP schools inaugurated

In 2008, The Northern Development Project (NDP) after negotiations with Balkh provincial authorities decided to construct two new schools in Sholgara district of Balkh province.

The construction of the schools, Bi-Bi Khadija Girls High School and Dawlatzai Primary School, started in the middle of 2008 and completed within six months. Before the new buildings, the students at both schools were sitting under tents.

The Bi-Bi Khadija School will be a model school consisting of 8 classrooms; and rooms for computer, library, principal, staff, store and school guards.

## CDCs trained at GPO

27 National Solidarity Programme's counsels' from Jaghato district of Wardak province received training in Ghazni training centre.

The three day training was conducted about school monitoring, community participation and the responsibilities for the schools to the Community Development Counsels.

"The CDC's are responsible for keeping track on the security of the schools and other security problems in the rural areas related to the teachers" says Abdul Qasim Wahaj, Education manager in WPO.

# Small funds – great impact for local civil society actors

## The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan initiated the Small Project Fund (SPF) in 2007, aiming to strengthen local capacity.

Through SPF support to the local civil society actors, the grantee organisations carry out seminars and trainings.

The seminars and trainings are in terms of human rights, building capacity of the organisations in the fields of the proposal development, budgeting and so forth.

"By providing funds to the small projects designed for the local

organisations in Afghanistan, the Swedish committee aims to strengthen the capacity of several civil society actors" says Josef Ahlberg, programme assistant at SCA.

**So far the initiative** supported 12 local organisations in the implementation of 14 different projects in the years 2007 and 2008. For the year 2009, it has funded 10 organisations.

The SPF is funded through Forum Syd. The scope for funding small project is 6000 USD.

## Some of the organisations funded by SPF in 2009

**The New Afghanistan Women Association (NAWA)** carried out training to Afghan female journalists' to increase knowledge and participation in the coming elections. The participants were from Parwan, Takhar, Kunduz, Herat, Nangarhar and Kabul provinces.

**Rahnuma Social Service Development Organisation (RSSDO)** in Parwan province conducted trainings to local civil actors in proposal writing, basic management and finance.

**Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF)** in Dai Kundi and Bamiyan provinces worked on the empowerment of civil society through capacity building and networking.

**The Asia Bam Disables Rehabilitation Centre (ABDRC)** in Herat province had the opportunity to improve and rehabilitate the capabilities of disabled people.

**Afghan Women Welfare development Organisation (AWWDO)** in Takhar province initiated awareness trainings to the barbers', women prisoners on hygiene, HIV/AIDS, human rights and conflict solving.

**Pashton Zhagh**, a local radio in Paktika Province broadcasts education and health programmes.

**SALAM** – cultural and development centre for Afghanistan in Kabul provided research methodology training to the youths of the Kabul University and Kabul Educational University. The students in ten groups did researches most about women's issues which are compiled in one book.

**Afghan Women Network (AWN)** in Kabul conducts six workshops for female students. Topics; women in politics, communication and journalism in Afghanistan.

Makhfi Azizi  
Info Unit

# Northern MPO establishes Female Staff Association

**The new social, cultural and economic association will work to support females.**

To respond to the concept that the high status of women should not be observed through sole slogans and ceremonies, it was suggested to establish a social organization to be able to reflect the pain, problems and thoughts of the women and practically recover them.

Therefore, this social and economic association of the female staff at Mazar Project Office came into existence.

**The association** under Rabia Balkhi will aim at enhancing the capacity of the female staff, finding solutions for their problems.

Rabia Balkhi is a social, cultural, economic and development association for female staff in Mazar Project Office of the SCA.

“I am happy to hear that a FSA in Mazar has been created. I encourage all our project offices to start FSA to strengthen our efforts in promoting female staff” says SCA Secretary General Torbjorn Pettersson in an e-mail.

Maryam Zhila  
Education Manager, MPO

## FACTS | FSA Mazar Project Office

### Short term objectives

- To increase coordination among the female staff with focus on support of the women's rights.
- To create a fund in order to assist the needy women.
- To provide facilities/nursery for small children of the female staff.
- To conduct regular monthly meetings to discuss past and future issues.

### Long term objectives

- To maintain relations with other organizations (local and international) for the exchange of experiences, development of activities and funding.
- To reach self-sufficiency and development at city and county level.

## ► Positive signs for mothers and child's health... *continued from page 1*

The students are selected through the communities to attend the training at the SCA midwife centre. They must have basic education of an ordinary school and should be ages at least 18. From this centre, 63 midwives have been trained since 2004 and 23 are currently in the training. SCA has also trained 64 other midwives in Kunduz, Jalalabad and Nuristan provinces.

**With an estimated 1600 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births**

Afghanistan still has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. One out of nine Afghan women dies in childbirth. Nine out of ten pregnant women deliver at home without any skilled midwife.

Due to no presence of a trained midwife in the villages, most women in rural villages deliver in their own home. Many of these deaths could be prevented by the presence of trained midwives.

Makhfi Azizi  
Info Unit

## NEWS | letter

### Swedish Committee for Afghanistan

The mission of SCA is to implement development and rehabilitation programmes in rural areas of Afghanistan.

SCA supports vulnerable people's right to education and health, improving their quality of life.

SCA has been operating in Afghanistan for more than 26 years.

[www.swedishcommitte.org](http://www.swedishcommitte.org)

### Deadline for contributions

No 4/2009 August 16  
No 5/2009 October 15

Please contact the Info Unit for guidelines before you start your work on articles and photos.

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**Winners.** The delegation from the SCA Mazar Project Office (MPO) after the ceremony.

## SCA awarded for best performances in Balkh

**Late in May SCA received a reward from Governor Atta Mohammad Noor for outstanding performances in Balkh province.**

The SCA Mazar Project Office was selected together with three other NGOs in competition with a total of 37 NGOs who are active in the Balkh province.

**Governor Atta Mohammad Noor** handed over a plaque and a certificate to SCA director of Operations Mr. Jorgen Holmstrom. SCA thanked the governor by

handing over a copy of “Afghanistan over a cup of tea”, a collection of chronicles written by the world leading expert on Afghanistan Ms. Nancy Hatch Dupree.

**SCA took the** opportunity to use the ceremony to advocate SCA values and had a delegation with equal number of male and female participants, among them one with sight impairment and two hearing-impaired.

During the ceremony, widely covered by media, SCAs female sign-language translator stood

next to governor Atta and translated the whole meeting.

SCAs main activities in the north are rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, construction works and education. The efforts in the north have increased since the Sida-funded Northern Development Project was initiated last year.

The other three NGOs rewarded were the Norwegian Project Office, Afghan Women Educational Centre and American-Afghan Friendship Association.

Info Unit