



AFGA Newsletter

First Quarter 2023





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AFGA Participation in Nepal SRH Summit



A 7-person delegation from AFGA consisting of AFGA Board Members, the CEO, Program Manager, and a representative from the MoPH participated in the first South-Asia SRH Summit which was conducted in Kathmandu, Nepal during January 18-26, 2023. The Afghan delegation had presentations and speeches during five sessions and well represented Afghanistan at the summit. The Summit was organized by the Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal, in collaboration with the Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN) and IPPF's South Asia Regional Office (SARO).

The objective of the Summit was to facilitate inter-country dialogue and sharing of best practices around Sexual and Reproductive Health. Government officials from eight countries, regional and country-level development partners and community leaders, and local and international NGOs participated in the Summit. The Afghan delegates visited a number of service delivery points of the FPAN in Katmandu to observe and learn from their experiences and new initiatives.



Additionally, during the summit, the IPPF-SARO presented the IPPF's accreditation certificate to AFGA. The accreditation certificate confirms AFGA's full membership for another three years.

AFGA Celebrated 8th March the International Women's Day

On March 8, 2023, Women's International Day was celebrated in AFGA main office with the participation of AFGA female staff, AFGA Board members, management, representatives from MoPH and a few provincial AFGA employees, online.

The event started with the opening speech of Mr. Najibullah Samim the CEO of AFGA. He welcomed the participants and admired the ceaseless efforts of AFGA female staff in the current challenging situation. Ms. Seema Ghani Massumi, the president of the AFGA board, talked about the vital role of women in the society. He said that "On the occasion of International Women's Day, I wholeheartedly thank and admire the efforts and services which are being provided by AFGA female staff in hard-to-reach areas in this challenging situation.



Dr. Nafisa Sahak- the Director of the Reproductive Health Department of MoPH also had a speech on the occasion of Women's International Day and praised their efforts in providing the needful services. She thanked AFGA for its tireless efforts in the provision of SRH services and for celebration of this important day. Besides, some of the AFGA board members, and staff had speeches regarding International Women's Day and the vital role of women in society. After the speeches, the AFGA management presented gifts to all AFGA female staff. A number of appreciation letters were awarded to the female employees who had better performance during the year 2022.

Taking the opportunity, the AFGA's new building was inaugurated after the celebration of Women's International Day.

The AFGA female staff appreciated the AFGA management team's efforts and support in organizing the event.



UNFPA Humanitarian Director Visit from AFGA



On March 16, 2023, Ms. Shoko Arakaki the UNFPA Humanitarian Director Visited AFGA Head Office in Kabul. Ms. Nada Naja and Dr. Rasikh the Deputy Country Representatives of UNFPA Afghanistan also attended the meeting. Ms. Seema Ghani Massumi the president of AFGA attended the meeting and welcomed the delegation from UNFPA. She appreciated UNFPA's support to AFGA and wished continuity of such supports in the future.

The main purpose of the meeting was to know about AFGA activities, its partnership with UNFPA, challenges AFGA women employees face and opportunities.

Mr. Najibullah Samim the CEO of AFGA had a presentation on AFGA operations and UNFPA Project achievements and activities during the year 2023. He also talked about AFGA-UNFPA's long-term partnership over the years.

"It's the first time that I have come to Afghanistan. I know that it is a difficult time for Afghan people, especially Afghan women but I appreciate AFGA's non-stop efforts in the health sector and humanitarian. She also added that UNFPA will support AFGA in providing quality health and humanitarian services."

Ms. Shoko Arakaki

Humanitarian Director, UNFPA



AFGA Initiated Last Mile Assurance (LMA) Pilot Project

AFGA through the financial support of UNFPA started the Last Mile Assurance Pilot Project in March 2023. Through this project, 48 volunteers from Kabul, Herat, and Balkh Provinces are assigned to support the team's effort in the distribution of different kits and commodities, assist in public awareness-raising activities, and assist in stock counts, and basic assessments of commodities that might be damaged, expired, or out-of-stock.



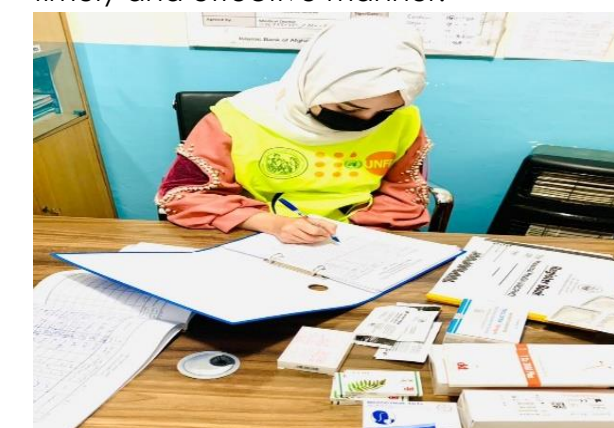
The 16 volunteers including 8 male and 8 female volunteers have been assigned to distribute different winterization kits and commodities, assist in public awareness-raising activities, and assist in stock counts, and basic assessments of commodities that might be damaged, expired, or out-of-stock in Kabul City. The 32 other (16 male and 16 female) volunteers were assigned to do the same task in Balkh and Herat Provinces.

The LMA volunteers say that hospital managers appreciated the support provided by the UNFPA and AFGA, especially in the pilot phase of the LMA project. Beneficiaries expressed their satisfaction with the project as they received the distributed medicine on time, and free of cost. The volunteers ensured that the distributed items reached the intended beneficiaries and found that the medical supplies were being distributed in a timely and effective manner.

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During March 2023, LMA/AFGA volunteers visited 13 hospitals and stocks in Kabul province. The LMA volunteers visited and supervised private hospitals, Family Health Houses (FHHs), Community Outreach Midwives (COMs), and warehouses in Herat province. Besides, the Balkh regional warehouse, Static clinic, UNFPA and NORAD FHHs, and Balkh regional office were visited by the LMA/AFGA Volunteers in Balkh Province.

Activating Youth Volunteers in the Last Mile Assurance is the UNFPA process to provide assurance that UNFPA program supplies are adequately managed and safeguarded across all levels of the supply chain, minimizing waste and fraud and reaching the service delivery points in a timely and effective manner.



Training Program on Child Marriage, Family Planning, and Healthy Lifestyle



Supported by Core Fund Project, AFGA conducted a series of three-day and one-day training programs on child marriage prevention, family planning, healthy lifestyle, mental health, and reporting mechanisms for 286 male youth volunteers in Kabul, during the first quarter of 2023.

The three-day training program was conducted in 5 batches, for 125 male youth volunteers, during the quarter. In addition, the

one-day training program was conducted in 3 batches for 161 male youth volunteers.

All the trainees were happy and satisfied with the services AFGA provided during the training and promised to share their learnings with their peers.



“The training was a great opportunity to learn about different important topics. We promise to implement the learnings with our peers and community. Thanks, AFGA.”

Omid Ahmadi
Participant



Through this training, the capacity of youth was enhanced on mentioned topics and enabled them to share the learnings with their peers. AFGA will continue to conduct such trainings in the future.

AFGA Newly Established FHHs in Logar Province

AFGA, under its NORAD-funded project and in coordination with Logar Province Public Health Directorate, launched 15 Family Health Houses (FHHs) in Charkh, Baraki Barak, and Mohammad Agha districts of Logar Province on February 23, 2023. A launching ceremony was organized by AFGA whereby the Director of Logar Province Public Health Directorate, community elders and AFGA management participated in the ceremony.

The FHHs will provide health services to vulnerable populations who do not have access to health services.



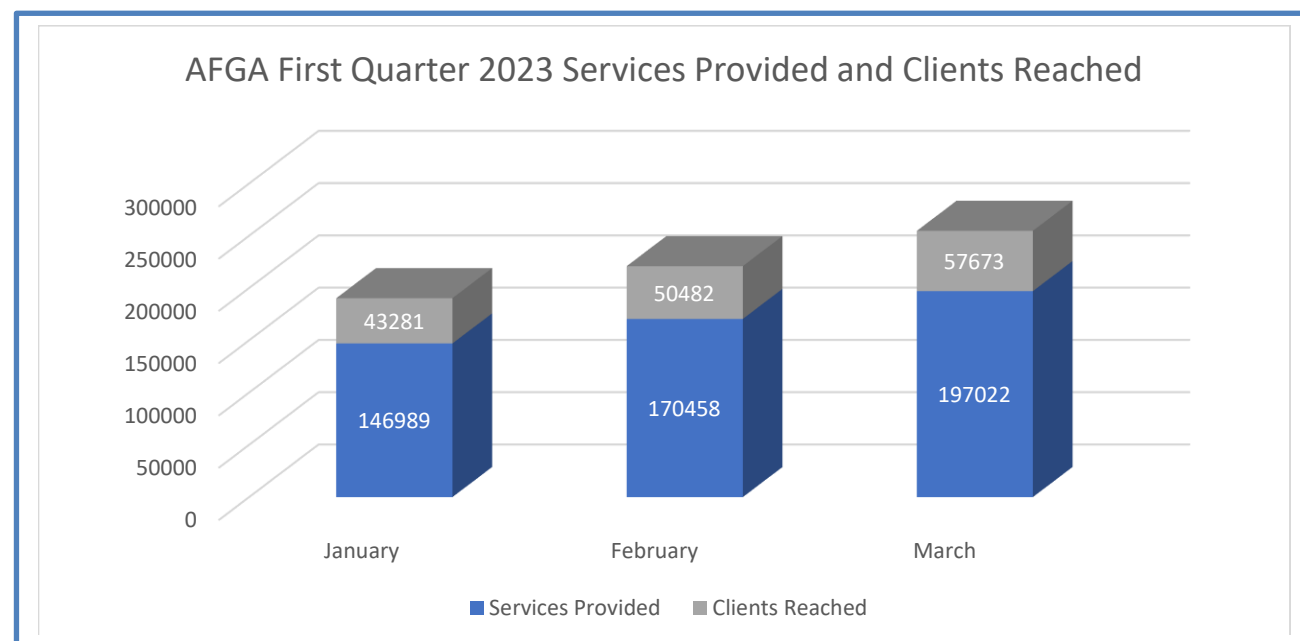
“The establishment of FHHs is an essential need for society and added that the mentioned FHHs are established in those districts where the health centers are very far away from them. Mr. Qaderi appreciated AFGA’s efforts in establishing these FHHs in Logar Province.”

Hafiz Saeed Ur Rahman Qaderi
Director of Logar Province Public Health Directorate

Dr. Mohammad Ajmal Alkozai said that AFGA is committed to providing health services to the vulnerable population of the country anywhere and at any time. The community elders thanked AFGA for launching these FHHs and promised their full support to AFGA .



AFGA Projects Services in the First Quarter of 2023



During this quarter, under the Core Fund project, a total of 69,982 clients were reached and over 296,441 services were provided.

The project team was mainly focused on providing orientation sessions for both program and service delivery staff. During this quarter, supportive supervision has been done from Istiqlal, Malalai, and Herat Static Clinics, a COM, 2 FHHs, and the Herat warehouse.

In addition, under the UNFPA Project, as per the UNFPA prior confirmation, most of the project routine activities were implemented including family planning commodities supply, ERH kits and winterization kits storage and preposition, RMNCAH services through 10 FHHs in Balkh province, advisory services by one operational MHL, youth and adolescents' awareness raising and training by integrated youth center at Ataturk hospital and UNFPA funded projects supervision and monitoring in Paktika province.

During the reporting period, AFGA established one main warehouse in Kabul and three regional stocks in Balkh, Herat, and Kandahar. Besides, the process of security guards' recruitment, procurement of equipment, and preposition of the winterization kits from Kabul to mentioned locations is completed.

The UNFPA project activities are categorized into four main focus areas for the year 2023 including; Family Planning services improvement, improvement of comprehensive reproductive health services, enhancement and availability of RMNCAH services during humanitarian, and providing adolescents and youth health services.

During this quarter, the coordination for 14 new MHTs is completed both at the central and provincial levels. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for family planning commodities is completed with three national and international NGOs and four tertiary hospitals in Kabul.

Furthermore, under the NORAD project, project activities including 72 FHHs, two Mobile Health Clinics, and a total of 95 COMs were continued in Kabul and 10 other provinces where over 64,551 clients were reached and a total of 201,845 services were provided.

Two mobile health clinics continued their work and provided SRHR services in pre-already selected sites in Kabul city. Besides, the project MHTs reached the clients and delivered quality health service six days a week in different locations of Kabul city and the residents are fully satisfied with the services they provide.



The recruitment process of two midwives for the Herat Province FHHs was completed and started their duties in early January 2023. Provincial offices of Herat, Balkh, Logar, and Parwan provinces extended their operations. LARC training was conducted for the Parwan and Kapisa Provinces FHHs midwives.

During the reporting period supportive supervision of MHT, 19 COMs and 14 FHHs of the Parwan Province were completed.

To sum up, during the first quarter, across all projects of AFGA, 151,436 clients were reached and a total of 514,469 services were provided through 11 static clinics, 2 mobile health clinics, 70 FHHs, and 98 community outreach midwives in 13 provinces.



Training Program on Child Marriage, GBV, and SRH for Youth Volunteers

The AFGA Integrated Youth Center, conducted a series of five-day training programs on child marriage prevention, family planning, GBV, SRH, and mental health for 100 participants including 60 male and 40 female youth volunteers in Kabul, during the first quarter of 2023.

The training was conducted in 6 batches, 4 batches for male and 2 batches for female youth volunteers, which started in January and ended in March 2023.

All the trainees were happy with the services AFGA provided during the training and promised to share their learnings with their peers.

"It was a great opportunity to take part in this important and useful training. I wholeheartedly thank AFGA and UNFPA for all their efforts. I believe that learnings from this training will help me and other participants in their personal and professional life."

Mariam Mohammadi
Student, Ghalib University

Through this training, the capacity of youth was enhanced on mentioned topics and enabled them to share the learnings with their peers. AFGA will continue to conduct such trainings in the coming months.



Training on Drug Use Prevention



AFGA's Integrated Youth Center (IYC) through the financial support of UNFPA and close coordination with UNODC, conducted a three-day training program on "Drug Use Prevention" for 21 participants including 14 male and 7 female, in AFGA Head Office, during April 3 – 5, 2023.

The participants were from AFGA Integrated Youth Center, the Y-Peer network, and UNFPA implementing partners including HEWAD, IMC, and WCC.

The training was conducted to enhance the knowledge and capacity of participants on the harms of drugs and drug use prevention.

Through this training, the capacity of IYC staff, Y-PEER Network, and UNFPA implementing Partners was enhanced on mentioned topics and enabled them to apply the learnings during their activities. AFGA IYC will continue to conduct such trainings in the coming months.

"We are thankful to AFGA and UNFPA for organizing this training. We will try our best to share our learnings with the community and will educate them about the harms of drugs."

Mehrabudin Noman
Participant



Effective Counseling for Family Planning Methods

Despite developments in Afghanistan's healthcare sector in the last two decades, in most of the remote districts/ areas of Afghanistan, people don't have full access even to basic health and hygiene services. An example of this issue could be Badakhshan - the northeastern province of Afghanistan.

Badakhshan is one of the 10 provinces where AFGA has Community Outreach Midwives (COMs) for providing door-to-door quality services in SRH and MCH for women of reproductive age and young girls under JSF and NORAD projects for the last two years.

One of the main services that community outreach midwives are involved in, is to provide the distribution of short-term family planning and counseling and referral of long-acting reversible family planning methods packages (Implant and IUD).

Ms. Hanifa Olker is one of AFGA COM under its NORAD projects in the capital of Badakhshan province, Faiz Abad City. She has 12 years of professional experience in this field and has many key achievements. Ms. Olker has been working with AFGA for two years.

Ms. Halima (allonym), and her husband were not ready to use birth spacing methods due to myths that she had heard from other women regarding the negative side effects of these methods. But recurrent pregnancies and no solution for it had made her weak and hopeless and the solution was not clear to her.

Ms. Hanifa Olker fortunately, made all the issues clear and made it easy for her and her husband, to make a wise decision. So, after many counseling sessions both of them agreed and choose the (Sayanpress) subcutaneous type of injectable method for having birth space.

During visits and follow-ups of clients, the health workers face many challenges and need to motivate people/families to accept such health services. This is indeed a very difficult and challenging job for midwives, particularly in illiterate and conservative communities.



Poverty and Coldness, A Small and Poor Family Story

Poverty and joblessness, are the two ugly issues that Afghan people are facing for a long time due to which people are not able to continue their life as they desired.

This success story is written regarding the living situation of Ms. Farkhunda an Afghan 34 years old woman.

Ms. Farkhunda is a tailor and lives in the Ala Say district of Kapisa province of Afghanistan. It's a long time since her husband is jobless and they face many challenges.

Their living area is one of the most remote and mountainous areas with non-asphalt roads and vehicles barely go to their area. Only vehicles with supporting gear can go.

Ms. Farkhunda complains about the cold weather in their living area. She says because of being mountains and geographic location, while the weather is rainy and snowy even, we cannot suffer the coldness and we don't have enough goods to keep our home warm.

Fortunately, AFGA with the support of UNFPA's fund donated a double-user blanket and 3 tarpaulins.

Farkhunda's husband Omid, while thanking AFGA said: "These blankets are too much useful for us and can help us to keep warm. He added that their house floor is damaged due to rain and whenever it rains, water enters the rooms and needs to be rebuilt."

Meanwhile, Ms. Farkhunda appreciated the AFGA and UNFPA support and said that because of poverty, people cannot purchase such high-quality blankets, and instead of that, people are using PATO (Shaal) or low-quality items as blankets.







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