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PRESS RELEASE



UNESCO and the Government of Italy Agreement on Supporting the Educational Radio and Television of Afghanistan

Kabul, Afghanistan, 17 February 2010

The Government of Italy and UNESCO agree on a new project entitled, "Development of (ERTV) for audio-visual support to teacher training in Afghanistan", to further capacity development of the Educational Radio and Television of Afghanistan ERTV.

The signing ceremony of the project, which is worth around USD 1 million, will be held today at the Ministry of Education in the presence of Mr. Farooq Wardak, Minister of Education, Mr. Claudio Glaentzer the Italian Ambassador to Kabul and Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi, Director UNESCO Kabul and UNESCO representative to Afghanistan.

This project focuses on developing the capacity of the ERTV as a producer and broadcaster of Educational materials. In close collaboration with the Teacher Education Department of the Ministry of Education, the project will enhance the distance learning initiative as one of the priorities of the Ministry of Education highlighted in National Education Strategic Plan NESP II (2010-2014).

Considering the physical burdens and lack of accessibility, especially in the winter season, the efficient use of audio-visual medium in the distance learning context will greatly help to gain access to more teachers in the rural areas of Afghanistan.

The project aims to develop the capacity of ERTV by using private sector collaboration in accordance to internationally recognised best practices relating to communication for development and media development; and to enhance the production quality of technical and educational aspects of audio-visual support programmes in teacher training both in formal education and literacy.

UNESCO and the Government of Italy have supported the ERTV since 2003. The first phase of mutual support to ERTV, which finished in December 2008, has led to the creation of a fully operational educational radio and TV production house with broadcasting capabilities. The newly renovated ERTV started broadcasting 24 hours radio programme and 12 hours television programme on a daily basis since April 2008.

UNESCO has been working in Afghanistan since 2003 to support the education, culture, communication and information sectors. Technical assistance on developing the Ministry of Education's five year strategic plan, conserving the World Heritage Sites of Bamiyan and Jam Minaret and assisting the process of fair and transparent flow of information are among key UNESCO's activities in the country.

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