Young Afghans, many of them girls, benefit from UN-backed computer courses

Young Afghans take advantage of free computer and English training programme

28 March 2011 – Hundreds of young Afghans, many of them girls, are getting free computer and English training under a United Nations-backed programme that is free and prepares them for future employment by assisting them with resume writing and preparing for job interviews.

The ICT4Youth a programme, created by the UN Development Programme (**UNDP**) and Deputy Ministry of Youth Affairs, trained some 300 young Afghans in 2010, nearly 40 per cent of them girls. In the first quarter of 2011, about 400 students have signed up.

Students are trained by a qualified teacher for one hour every day in basic computer software and Internet skills in classes that are timed so as not to conflict with regular school, and flexible enough to allow participants to continue with their activities at home.

"The classroom environment of ICT4Youth programme is safe and comfortable, so my family does not object to my attending these classes," Humaira, a female high school student, said.

Another female student, Zarmina, regularly brings her nephew to classes so that she can watch him while continuing the training. Some young women take the skills they learn back to their jobs.

"I train a group of colleagues in the Ministry of Interior," said Samira, a woman in her early 20s. This is her first opportunity to attend a course specifically to develop her ICT and English skills.

The **programme** is part of UNDP's National Institution Building Project to develop comprehensive and sustainable capacities in government of Afghanistan.

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