



## SUCCESS STORY

### Girls' Education Thrives in Kandahar Province

**Counterpart's I-PACS works to promote the capacity of grassroots civil society organizations throughout Afghanistan**



School girls in Kandahar, by KHDO

“If these courses were offered somewhere else – not at the school – I don’t think I or other parents would feel comfortable allowing our daughters to attend. However, we are happy that they are getting this extra opportunity for learning, inside their own school, where it is safe and we know the staff,” says the father of one student.

As a result of long-standing traditions, as well as oppression under the Taliban regime, Afghan girls and young women do not receive adequate education, leaving them without any marketable skills. In rural and unstable areas, like Kandahar province, Counterpart International’s Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society (I-PACS) realizes the critical need for female-focused vocational skills trainings.

Recently, the Kandahar Health and Development Organization (KHDO) conducted a computer and English language training program for 70 girls and young women in Kandahar province. The program gives these young women the skills needed to increase their employability and, ultimately, their financial independence.

In April 2008, four KHDO staff members attended an I-PACS training session on proposal writing. “In this training, we learned new techniques and methodologies for writing quality proposals,” shared Ms. Farzana Ibrahim, the Director of KHDO.

KHDO staff members put these new skills into practice when writing a proposal for their computer and English language program. They also received further I-PACS technical assistance while preparing the proposal. In the end, KHDO submitted the proposal to the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and in June 2009, they received a \$19,000 award to run the extra-curricular classes for adolescent girls.

With the grant, KHDO targets and supports female students attending AINU High School in Kandahar city. Led by three qualified female teachers, a class of 70 girls has already completed the program and become skilled in general computer-usage, MS office package as well as basic English language skills.

KHDO reported that as a result of this course, one girl passed the entrance exam for Kabul University, and two girls were accepted into Canada’s SAIT Polytechnic two-year online management degree program.

By providing training and technical support to organizations such as KHDO, Counterpart’s I-PACS is strengthening organizations that have direct impact on the lives of Afghan girls and women and Afghan civil society as a whole.