



March 8, 2016

Kunduz : UNDP funds restart of local stations Sheasta Radio and Kaihan Radio which were destroyed during occupation of the city by the Taliban in September 2015.

A statement of the UN agency said, Shaesta, a radio network dedicated to women's issues, and Kaihan, which serves youth, were both looted during the takeover of Kunduz last September, and their staff were forced into hiding. Previously they reached Kunduz and neighbouring provinces with information on how to access healthcare and education, as well as women's legal and political rights.

UNDP has replaced damaged equipment, allowing both stations to resume programming in time for International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

“Our two stations share the same equipment, so this investment goes a long way,” said Zarghoona Hassan, Editor-in-Chief of Shaesta. “Over the next few months, we’ll be promoting women’s rights and youth issues throughout the local area.”

In Afghanistan, 73 percent of households own a radio compared to 45 percent with a television. This makes radio the most cost-effective way to reach large numbers of people, especially in areas with low literacy rates.

“Local radio is a great way to spread important messages about women’s rights where they need to be heard the most,” said Cecilia Ncube, UNDP’s Gender Project Manager.

Women in conservative areas such as Kunduz are often denied healthcare, employment and legal services, as well as basic rights and freedoms. Local radio can advocate for social change and also let women know what services are available, what their rights are and where they can go if they need help.

“We stand behind the people of Kunduz and are proud that we can help women regain their voice,” said UNDP Country Director, Douglas Keh. “Hearing other women’s voices on air can bring hope and encouragement to those who feel trapped at home and are afraid to speak out.”