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Moot Court Experience for Law Students

USAID Support Builds the Capacity of Aspiring Lawyers



The Balkh University Team comes first in the 2015 Moot Court Competition

“Although the moot court was a competitive program, it was an educational experience as well. In addition to internal court procedures I also learned international court procedures too. I hope that this program continues in the future, because I didn’t have such an excellent experience in the faculty so far.” - Ms. Rokhsar Soadat, Best Oralist, Balkh University

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The Media Law Moot Court Competition has been an integral part of Internews’ media development program for four years. It is now being continued under the Afghan Civic Engagement Program (ACEP), which is co-implemented by Internews, Counterpart International and the Aga Khan Foundation.

“As you know, one of the pressing needs of Universities, especially in law faculties, is the lack academic opportunities for both students and professors. The media law moot court competition is a very effective program in terms of practical activities, writing memorials, pleading before a court, learning media law issues from national and international perspectives and orally developing arguments before a court” said Professor Abdul Wahab of Khost University, a 2013 moot court participant turned coach.

The Media Law Moot Court give young lawyers the opportunity to gain courtroom experience and argue briefs in front of judges on journalists’ rights, and freedom of expression, information and media. The winning team goes on to compete with other university teams at the regional level; and if they are successful, they compete at the global finals.

The Moot Court Competition teaches students research and litigation skills in an engaging and participatory environment, preparing them to be both good lawyers and strong advocates for open media in Afghanistan. Naira Amin, who participated as a student, is now a practicing lawyer and served as the first female judge at this year’s competition: “I participated moot courts in the third year [of law school], I was really passionate to learn and win the competition. And I have achieved what I was expecting from these wonderful opportunities.”

Parisa Sadaat, a participant from Alberoni University, explained that, “The Media law Moot Court Competition...moves forward step by step to institutionalize media law issues.”

As the Moot Court program grows, so does legal expertise on media regulatory issues. Engaging universities and their students is a vital step toward institutionalizing freedom of expression and media development throughout Afghanistan.