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Afghans Have to Wait 9 More Years

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The people of Afghanistan have to wait at least until 2021 to access better health facilities. The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) is working on a nine-year health plan to ensure provision of equal health services in the future throughout Afghanistan. Public health minister Dr. Suraya Dalil on Sunday said her ministry was working on a new policy to ensure equal health services across the nation over next nine years. "The policy is being launched with financial support from the international community," Dalil told reporters after concluding a two-day meeting with donors in Kabul. She hoped the strategy, to be implemented until 2021, would help expand quality and advanced healthcare services to the people who had currently no access to even basic facilities in remote parts.

Such a plan comes at a time when last month, President Hamid Karzai came up with admission to fact that medical services were still poor in Afghanistan. Speaking at the conference 'Enhancing Medical Ethics in Afghanistan,' he said the health sector of Afghanistan had not any significant development in the last decade.

The health sector of Afghanistan still suffers due to lack of professional doctors, quality medicines and research and development projects, although handsome amount of fund has been poured in the country in the last ten years for improving health services. Meanwhile, people who need special treatment, continue to suffer because of not having access to professional health

services and are compelled to bear the trouble of travelling abroad - a measure that costs most of them more than their savings of years.

As an example, the health facilities being provided to mothers and children in Afghanistan are negligible and inadequate. If in Kabul the condition has undergone somewhat positive change, in other province of Afghanistan it is very concerning. Afghanistan is one of the worst places to be a mother, with women having a life expectancy of 45 years — the world's lowest — and one of every 11 women die at the time of childbirth. One of every five children in the country does not live to age 5. By contrast, a typical Norwegian woman lives to be 83 years old, and just one in 175 will lose a child before his or her 5th birthday.

The nine-year plan of MoPH for allowing Afghans to access equal and better health services comes late but is appreciable. It would mean wasting time if remain stuck to the question that what the ministry has been doing in the last ten years and why such plan was not initiated long ago? It is hoped that MoPH will take further measures to improve conditions in hospitals, control quality of the medicine and analyze qualification of the doctors.