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THE BAYAT FOUNDATION LAUNCHES 'MANO KODAKAM' EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT APP TO GIVE AFGHAN CHILDREN THE BEST START IN LIFE

Kabul, Afghanistan — MAY 31, 2022 — Continuing its founding mission of nourishing the lives of Afghans, **The Bayat Foundation** (www.bayatfoundation.org), Afghanistan's largest private philanthropic organization and member of **The Bayat Group** (www.bayat-group.com) launched a new early childhood development (ECD) initiative aimed at increasing awareness around the importance of a child's early years, and empowering Afghan parents and caregivers to give their children the best start in life.

Named 'Mano Kodakam', this innovative application will inspire parents and caregivers to have more frequent, quality interactions with children and improve their behavior by highlighting doable and desirable actions such as simple activities like "peek-a-boo" that are scientifically proven to have a significant impact on a child's development.

Bayat Foundation Executive Director, Mrs. Fatema Laya Bayat, stated: "Children need nurturing care and playful parenting right from the start in order to support their brain development and future potential. Mano Kodakam aims to give Afghan parents and caregivers the knowledge they need during their precious early years. The science shows that it's the little moments of connection and interaction, repeated often and especially during the toughest of times, that can make all the difference."

The app has both Dari and Pashto versions available for free on both IOS and Android operating systems, and is accessible even on lower tech, older mobile devices. Much of the core information will also be made available via a range of channels including social media, SMS, radio, television, as well as, in print and digital media.

"Every Afghan child, no matter where they live, has a right to the best possible start to life," stated Bayat Foundation co-founder, Dr. Ehsan Bayat. "Education has long been a priority for the Bayat Foundation, and the 'Mano Kodakam' app will inform and empower parents and caregivers to help their children reach their full potential, particularly in communities where awareness of the importance of early childhood development is low, or where access to this information is limited, by providing them easily accessible information tailored to the Afghan way of life."

'Mano Kodakam' content is based on in-depth anthropological analyses of global parenting and community norms, gender roles and parenting roles, as well as the specific religious, cultural and environmental factors of Afghanistan. The Bayat Foundation worked in partnership with Australia's Minderoo Foundation, in collaboration with the University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre to ensure the most advanced neuroscience and the practices of child-rearing were merged with Afghan traditions to create an environment that will help each Afghan child to reach their maximum cognitive and emotional potential.

About the Bayat Foundation:

Since 2005, the US-based Bayat Foundation, a 501 c (3) charitable organization, has promoted the well-being of the Afghan people. Founded and directed by Ehsanollah Bayat and Fatema Bayat, the Foundation has contributed to more than 300 projects dedicated to



improving the quality of life for the youth, women, poor, and elderly of Afghanistan; including construction of 14 maternity hospitals that have now treated over 3,000,000 mothers and babies.

Projects have included the construction of new facilities and sustainable infrastructure in needy regions, and the promotion of health, education, economic, and cultural programs. In addition to his charitable initiatives, Ehsanollah Bayat founded Afghan Wireless (AWCC) in 2002, which was the first GSM wireless and Internet Service Provider in Afghanistan, and later established Ariana Radio and Television Network (ATN), which includes Ariana Radio (FM 93.5). For more information, please email info@bayatfoundation.org.