



PRESS RELEASE

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USAID Invites Organizations to Apply for Grants Strengthening Employment Training in Key Economic Sectors

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN | OCTOBER 15 – Over a hundred representatives from approximately seventy different national and international private companies and non-governmental organizations gathered in Kabul at the second Pre-Application Conference organized by the USAID-funded Afghanistan Workforce Development Program (AWDP). The first Conference of this nature took place just two weeks ago introducing four Requests for Applications (RFAs) focused on Construction, Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Employment-related Services and Financial Management. This time, the Conference presented three new RFAs concentrating on: Women in the Private Sector, Business Communication & Employability Skills, and Project Management Skills.

In his opening remarks, USAID representative James Small, said: “In light of the daunting challenges posed by the burgeoning labor market in Afghanistan, AWDP will increase access to quality technical and business education and training, along with job placement services, as one of the priority programs in the Agency’s portfolio.”

Conference participants discussed and reviewed the specifics of the new RFAs, announced on October 8th, 2012, asked questions and sought clarification to prepare responsive applications. All questions and answers collected during the Conference, as was the case following the previous Conference, will be shared with potential bidders and posted on the AWDP website. The deadline to respond to the three new RFAs and submit the proposals for review is October 29th.

The AWDP complements efforts by the Afghan government, the U.S. Government and other donors to address the challenges of high unemployment caused by the gap between the limited number of Afghans who possess technical and business management skills at the mid-level and the market demands for technically skilled labor, business administrators and managers. The goal of the AWDP is to increase job placements, salaries/wages and self-employment opportunities for 25,000 Afghans, 25% of whom will be women, through increased access to quality technical and business education and training, and job placement support services. The program provides grants and technical assistance to grantees developing and strengthening skills of the labor supply in construction, mining, ICT, business management, and service industries in the six major cities of Afghanistan: Kabul, Herat, Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad, Kandahar and Kunduz. The increase of highly qualified, demand-driven labor supply will contribute to the growth of the key economic sectors throughout Afghanistan. The AWDP is implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education (MoE), and collaboration of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD).

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