



PRESS RELEASE

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ABADE Program Launched to Support Afghan Businesses

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN | February 13, 2013 – Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have the potential to be a key economic driver of Afghanistan's development. However, Afghan business owners struggle to obtain the capital, management advice, equipment, and technologies needed to grow their businesses. Women and youth can make significant contributions to private sector growth but have limited opportunities for economic participation.

USAID, in partnership with VEGA/IESC, today launched the Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprises (ABADE) Program. ABADE aims to significantly improve the lives of people in Afghanistan by helping Afghan businesses grow their businesses.

"Afghanistan has many talented entrepreneurs who have shown that businesses can prosper and create employment, despite difficult conditions. Through ABADE, our goal is to help these businesses thrive," said USAID Deputy Mission Director Brooke Isham.

"It is very important to provide financial assistance to growing small and medium Afghan enterprises. I hope this project will help Afghanistan be a self-reliant nation in the future," said Minister of Commerce Dr. Anwar ul Haq Ahadi.

ABADE partners with the private sector to increase investment, job creation, and productivity of businesses, with a focus on advancing opportunities women and youths. The program incorporates three components that will contribute to sustained business growth and employment:

1. Public-Private Alliances (PPAs) with Afghan SMEs and Innovation Partners;
2. Technical assistance and advisory services to Afghan Alliance Partners and related SMEs to ensure the success of the PPAs; and
3. Business enabling environment support to remove administrative and regulatory barriers to business success.

The American people, through the U.S. Agency for International Development, have provided economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide for more than 50 years."



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The launch event informed participants about opportunities to partner with ABADE through Public-Private Alliances. Afghan government partners, in particular the Ministry of Commerce and Industries and the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency, expressed support for ABADE. USAID is committed to working with all stakeholders to build a better future for Afghanistan.

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For more information about USAID's programs, please visit: <http://afghanistan.usaid.gov>

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