



CREATIVE

Project Overview



Afghanistan Workforce Development Program

Quick Facts

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According to the World Bank, Afghanistan's unemployment rate spiked 15% in 2015, from 25% to 40%.

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The program works with employers to identify needed skills, tailor curriculum, train workers and places them in competitive jobs.

3

The program provides job seekers with in-demand business skills including financial management, project management and communication skills.

Underinvestment in vocational education has created a deficit in the skilled labor Afghanistan needs to recover from decades of conflict.

In 2015, Afghanistan's unemployment rate spiked to 40 percent, according to the World Bank, plagued by a gap between the number of Afghans who possess mid-level technical and business management skills and the market demand for these skills. In response, Creative Associates International's Afghanistan Workforce Development Program, funded by USAID, seeks to increase job placements and wages for more than 27,000 people through access to quality technical and business training, as well as job placement support.

The Afghanistan Workforce Development Program is an exception to the unsuccessful pattern of training with no direct focus on employment. Instead of the traditional model, the Afghanistan Workforce Development Program collaborates with employers to customize programs based on their actual needs. To date, the program has provided more than 27,000 unemployed workers, as well as mid-level employees, with training that aligns with market demands.

Shifting the job training paradigm

With the help of its network of grantee organizations, the Afghanistan Workforce Development Program follows a four-step training development process: assessing the needs of employers; creating relevant curricula; conducting training for qualified applicants; and providing employment services

to ensure graduates find jobs or improve their employment status.

The program offers training courses in business communication, project management, construction, financial management, ICT and other sectors. Its private sector partners include communication companies, banks, hospitals, construction companies and other businesses throughout Afghanistan.

The program's trainings give special focus to advancing job skills and employment opportunities for women. To date, more than 36 percent of those trained have been women—surpassing the program's original goal that 25 percent of those trained be women. To reach that goal, the program created a "Women in Private Sector" grant especially for motivated businesswomen.

Grantees have responded to the Afghanistan Workforce Development Program's

strong emphasis on training women by using a number of techniques to attract more female trainees: Many grantees provide separate training facilities for men and women. One grantee advertised a special certified accounting class for women only. Another grantee working with construction companies—a male-dominated industry—found a critical role for women in administrative and financial management.

Building a network of partners

Ingrained in the program's model is a cycle of capacity building: trainees gain capacity through competency-based courses, while grantee organizations supporting trainings grow through the Afghanistan Workforce Development Program's robust application process and grant implementation.

The program also provides technical assistance to Afghanistan's Ministry of Education, particularly the Technical and Vocational Education and Training office. Through the program, the Afghan government is learning how to effectively manage international donor money and implement workforce development programs, with the ultimate goal of sustainability.

The Afghanistan Workforce Development Program demand-driven model is already changing lives. More than 17,000 graduates have found work, received promotions and/or increased their wages after completing training.



17,656

Number of program graduates that have found work, received promotions, and/or increased their wages.



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