



# German Cooperation with Afghanistan

## +++ Press Release +++

### Improving Women's Business and Entrepreneurial Skills for Sustainable Economic Growth

**Kabul, 30th December 2020** – A four-month project for strengthening women's skills and their role in business ends tomorrow in Kabul. The Organization for Afghan Women Capacity and Knowledge (OAWCK) implemented the project called Empowering Women through Improving Business Skills. It included 48 training sessions, 12 advocacy sessions and 12 sensitisation sessions for 25 women entrepreneurs. The Afghan-German Cooperation's Open Policy Advisory Fund (OPAF) funded the project through its Mini-Fund for Women Empowerment.

Ms Hasina Majidy, founder and president of Ahora Training and Cloth Manufacturing Company emphasised, 'This was an excellent project with a holistic approach. I learned a lot that will help me manage my company more effectively and efficiently. The sessions with high-ranking governmental officials will help us advocate for a better environment for our businesses and establish contacts. The sensitisation sessions with financial institutions were wonderful opportunities to learn about their rules and requirements and discuss the existing opportunities and challenges.'

The entrepreneurs were selected in close coordination between the Afghan Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC) and Afghan Women's Business Federation (AWBF). Through the project, the selected women from different backgrounds had the opportunity to learn, advocate, and network.

The training sessions covered financial management and accounting, sales and marketing management, business plan development, business communication, customer services and effective presentation skills. The advocacy sessions for reforms at the policy level included sessions with H.E. Nesar Ahmad Ghoryani, Minister of Industry and Commerce of Afghanistan and Mr Mohammad Daoud Sultanzoy, Mayor of Kabul. The sensitisation sessions with financial institutions including Afghanistan International Bank (AIB) and the First Microfinance Bank of Afghanistan (FMFB) aimed at enhancing women entrepreneurs' access to financial products and services.

Ms Hajar Sadat Hussaini, president of Andisha Tourism Company stated, 'After attending the training sessions, I started revising my business plan and my sales and marketing approach. In addition, I noticed mistakes in my financial management and record keeping. I established contacts with other businesswomen, financial institutions, and relevant government organisations and I now have a useful and effective network.'

Most women-led enterprises in Afghanistan are small, marginal, and informal. Up to now, most of Afghanistan's women entrepreneurs have not been able to take advantage of available business opportunities and resources. This is largely due to a lack of information and required business and entrepreneurial skills. Investing in women's entrepreneurship and empowering entrepreneurs is essential for economic growth and sustainable development of the country.

*The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH implements the programme Open Policy Advisory Fund (OPAF) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). With its demand-driven approach and high flexibility, OPAF enables state actors to implement reform steps that contribute to political and social participation and encourages civil society to take part in political decision-making. The project offers expertise, advice, training courses and coaching for Afghan agencies, ministries and civil society organisations with a specific focus on anti-corruption. Between 2014 and mid-2019, around 200 decision makers within public institutions took part in training courses. OPAF has helped foster a South-South cooperation between the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) and the Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK), enabling staff from both bodies to share experience and provide collegial support.*

Released by the PR-Unit of the German Cooperation with Afghanistan.

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