



PRESS RELEASE

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USAID launches \$13.3 million investment climate reform program

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) announced a new \$13.3 million program to make it easier for private sector firms to do business in Afghanistan.

The four-year Afghanistan Investment Climate Reform Program will be implemented by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group. The program will work at the national and provincial levels to stimulate economic growth and enhance the country's competitiveness. In addition to Kabul, the program focuses on major economic centers throughout the country, including Mazar, Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad.

The program was launched at a ceremony yesterday at the U.S. Embassy. "The Afghanistan Investment Climate Reform Program addresses critical challenges faced by the private sector," said U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan P. Michael McKinley. "Together with the Government of Afghanistan, which has reaffirmed its commitment to economic reforms, we will help promote investment and make Afghanistan an attractive place to do business."

The program's main goal is to reduce hurdles for new and existing businesses to operate effectively by simplifying regulations and reducing compliance costs by: 1) improving the legal and regulatory framework for businesses at the national and provincial levels; 2) streamlining procedures hampering private sector operations; and 3) encouraging growth and investment in key sectors.

The new program builds upon existing USAID-funded activities with the IFC/World Bank supporting reforms in construction permits and regulations within the context of the World Bank's "Doing Business" indicators.

For more information about USAID's programs and interview requests please contact USAID/Afghanistan at (+93 (0) 700-114060) KabulAIDdoc@usaid.gov, <http://www.usaid.gov/Afghanistan>

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